

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US AT THE B.A.R.



BAY AREA REPORTER

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Jane Philomen Cleland

Garland fans

The decorations on this house on 21st Street, between Sanchez and Dolores, have become legendary as they have grown more opulent each year. The focal point is the living tree, which was first bought in a pot at the local Safeway but has now grown to more than 35 feet tall, requiring the use of a cherry-picker to decorate it. Santa stands by to pass out candy canes and answer onlookers' inevitable questions.

Part I: January - June Through our rear-view mirror 1998

by Cynthia Laird

Bay Area lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgendered people didn't take any giant steps forward in 1998, but — despite the interference of enemies old and new — the community also avoided losing ground. Except for the perennial problem of anti-gay violence, 1998 was relatively calm in Northern California, which contrasted sharply with the turbulence in the rest of the country [see "The nation in review," page 14]. For San Franciscans, 1998 was a time for sunshine in nonprofit groups, equality in employment benefits, continuing efforts to keep medical marijuana decriminalized, debates over "professional panhandling," and conflicting opinions about the need for tenant protections. It was also a year when AIDS lessened its horrific grip slightly, allowing more friends to live longer, healthier lives.

Here is a quick summary of the highs and lows of the first half of the millennium's penultimate year, as told in the stories of the Bay Area Reporter.

January

The new year was just ushered in when **medical marijuana clubs** in San Francisco braced for raids. California Attorney General Dan Lungren, the Republican candidate for governor, was itching to close cannabis clubs in the state, including several in the Bay Area. Cannabis Helping Alleviate Medical Problems (CHAMP) was the first to shut its doors, even while **Dennis Peron**, of the Cannabis Cultivators Club, remained defiant. The battle continued in federal court, when the U.S. Department of Justice filed civil lawsuits to shut down six clubs, including Peron's. "We have acted to halt repeated and widespread violations of the federal

Controlled Substances Act," said U.S. Attorney Michael Yamaguchi at a hastily called news conference January 9.

Smoking of a different kind became illegal on January 1, when it became a criminal act to light up **tobacco inside a bar** in California.

On the health front, Mayor **Willie Brown** named openly gay **Dr. Mitch Katz** as the city's health director at his first HIV/AIDS Summit on January 27. Katz is the city's second gay top public health official; he replaced Latina lesbian Dr. Sandra Hernandez, who resigned in 1997.

The mayor's **AIDS Summit** brought together hundreds of consumers, service providers, medical experts, and policymakers for a day devoted to finding ways to combat the epidemic. Hundreds of recommendations were made in a variety of areas, some of which are being implemented.

Also at the summit, the mayor named longtime gay activist **Dick Pabich** as the city's "AIDS czar." Pabich served without taking pay until he had to resign for health reasons in August.

The mayor also released a report by the city's Human Rights Commission that showed San Francisco's landmark **equal benefits ordinance** was a success with 1,270 city contractors offering domestic partner benefits. The law requires companies doing business with the city offer benefits to domestic partners of employees if those benefits are offered to spouses. A lawsuit filed by the Air Transport Association (ATA), attempting to circumvent the ordinance, was still in U.S. District Court Judge Claudia Wilken's hands, awaiting a decision.

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Holiday dinners for all in need, all need volunteers

by Mark Norby

Open minds, open hearts, and open hands rule when it comes to charitable groups and the holiday season, and whether you are celebrating the winter solstice, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, or just gettin' down, there are open arms surrounding us offering an embrace.

Volunteers from the Bay Area Jewish community have lit a candle on their menorah and are lending a hand to help feed 1,200 people with AIDS on Christmas Day. For the seventh year in a row, 80 representatives of the temple Sha'ar Zahav will, together with Jewish Family and Children's Services, offer their services by preparing festive holiday meals on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The meals will be delivered to clients of **Project Open Hand** (POH), which provides food to more than 5,000 men, women, and children with AIDS in San Francisco and Alameda counties.

POH needs more volunteers to help with

the Christmas Day meals. The day will be broken into three shifts: food preparation, 9 to 11:30 a.m.; meal assembly line, 12:45 to 2:15 p.m.; and meal delivery, 3:30 to 5 p.m. Interested volunteers will meet at the POH San Francisco location at 730 Polk Street, and should call (415) 447-2300 as soon as possible.

The **AIDS Emergency Fund (AEF)** will hold its annual Christmas Eve dinner for people with AIDS from noon to 3 p.m. at the War Memorial and Performing Arts Center, 401 Van Ness Avenue at McAllister. Those interested in helping out should call the AEF volunteer line at (415) 431-5914, or send an e-mail to aefxmas@aol.com.

Simply Supper is a Christmas Day dinner for all served from noon to 2 p.m. at the Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy, 4235 19th Street at Collingwood in the Castro. "This is a dinner for absolutely everyone, gay, lesbian, straight, young, old, whatever," organizer Tommi Avicoli Mecca told the Bay Area Reporter. The dinner is sponsored in part by the

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Jane Philomen Cleland

It's in the bag: Volunteer Lisa Ethering was among those distributing thousands of food bags at Glide Memorial Church on Monday. Glide will also serve meals on Christmas Day.

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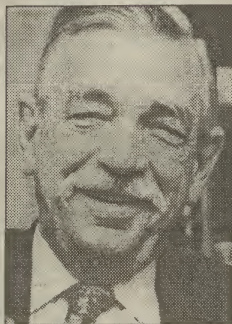
B.A.R. publisher elected Golden Gate Bridge prez

by Mike Salinas

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transit District board of directors unanimously elected Bob Ross as its 34th president Friday, December 18. Ross, who was first appointed to the board in 1973, is its first openly gay president.

He is also founder and publisher of the *Bay Area Reporter*, the president of the National Gay Newspaper Guild, the president of Meals on Wheels San Francisco, a trustee of the San Francisco Ballet board, and a board member of the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation.

Ross said his immediate priority as president of the board is to oversee the hiring of three upper-level positions: a general manager, a district secretary, and a bridge manager for the Golden Gate Bridge. "It seems everyone is



Bob Ross

retiring just as I'm becoming president," he said ruefully. Another pressing concern is funding for a seismic retrofit of the bridge, a project with an estimated cost of nearly \$200 million.

Ross said he also hopes to in-

stall a public safety railing on the bridge between the sidewalks and roadway, a project he has supported for more than two years.

The Golden Gate board consists of 19 directors from the counties of San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, and Del Norte, the counties that originally underwrote the bonds to finance the Golden Gate Bridge. In addition to the bridge itself, the board oversees a mass transit system of motor coaches between San Francisco and Healdsburg in the Russian River area of Sonoma County, as well as ferries connecting San Francisco with two locations in Marin County. "We hope to expand that service," Ross said.

With Ross's appointment, the Bay Area boasts the two highest ranking openly gay transportation officials in the country; John Martin, director of the San Francisco International Airport is the other. ▽

Gay, HIV+ doc to head GLMA's public policy dept.

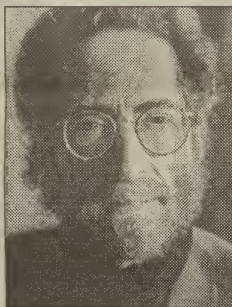
by Cynthia Laird

Dr. Fred Fox, a gay and HIV-positive fellow of the American College of Physicians who also holds a master's degree in public policy, was hired as the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's (GLMA) new director of public policy. Fox is the first physician to hold a position on GLMA's staff. He replaces Marj Plumb, who resigned from the position in July.

Fox's hiring is just one of the changes that is underway at GLMA; the organization is currently conducting a search for an executive director to replace the outgoing Ben Schatz, who announced his resignation in October and leaves in March.

"Fred's background in medicine and public policy clearly provides a strong basis for GLMA's policy work with other medical associations and with government officials," said Dr. Kathy Oriel, GLMA's president and a professor of family medicine at the University of Wisconsin. "It is incredibly exciting to have a physician join the GLMA staff at this juncture in GLMA's organizational growth."

A graduate of Harvard College, Harvard Medical School, and Harvard's Kennedy School of Govern-



Dr. Fred Fox

ment, Fox has practiced internal medicine at the Mason Clinic in Seattle and emergency medicine in Texas; at Valley Medical Center in Livermore; and at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco. His public policy and public health experience includes work as a commissioned officer for the U.S. Public Health Service in Seattle.

"I was drawn to this job because of the political and activist feelings I developed early on but never had a chance to play out in college and in medical school," said Fox. "I'm at a point in my life where being an activist and fighting for civil rights is what I care about, and the context and setting of this position at

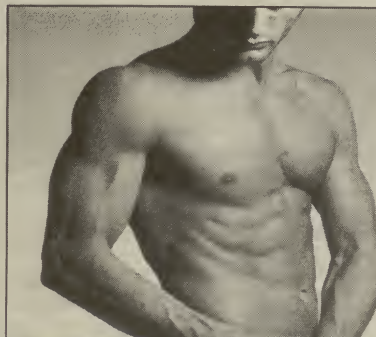
GLMA are perfect."

Fox's background as a physician will play an important role in building GLMA's membership as well as expanding its advocacy efforts. Further, as an HIV-positive physician, Fox brings important insights to GLMA's medical expertise retention program, which addresses the unique concerns of HIV-positive health care workers.

GLMA, based in San Francisco, is an organization of 2,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) physicians, medical students, and their supporters in all 50 states and 12 countries. The group works to combat homophobia within the medical profession and in society at large and to promote quality health care for LGBT patients.

"This job is a perfect example of a light going on for an HIV-positive individual who thought he was going to die and now has a new beginning," said Fox. "I'm out about being HIV-positive because I think my strongest political strength is to be open and out. There's great added strength from personal experience." ▽

For more info about GLMA, check out their website at <http://www.glma.org> or call (415) 255-4547.



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First class service returns to Castro after residents go postal

by Mark Norby

San Francisco Postmaster George S. Kikuchi has announced the new Postal Store at 18th and Diamond streets will again receive and hold parcels for pick-up by neighborhood residents. Since November 9, Castro neighborhood residents have been forced to venture an additional 18 blocks to 15th and Bryant streets to pick up undelivered packages.

The original post office on 18th Street had previously operated as a traditional U.S. government mailing and shipping outlet, but was renovated and reopened last month as a retail-oriented store without the convenience of pick-ups. The issue, first reported last month by the *Bay Area Reporter* [see "New Postal Retail Store Upsets Castro," November 26, and "Castro shop offers service post office won't," December 3], received immediate attention by several area residents living in the affected zip codes.

A Castro Street retail postal business stepped in and assisted in dealing with one of the hot points of this issue, the inconvenience to residents who were previously able to receive HIV, AIDS, and other vital medications at the convenient 18th Street location. P.O. Plus, located at 584 Castro Street, alerted residents that it would "as a community service, pick up essential medications for Castro residents for free." The company normally charges \$2 per package, and a \$2 storage fee per day, after the first day.

Shortly thereafter, Kikuchi reinstated the services at the 18th Street Postal Store. "We heard you," he wrote in a letter to the Merchants of Upper Market and Castro (MUMC) and Castro neighborhood residents. "Beginning Wednesday, December 16 you may pick up parcels, as well as accountable mail (certified, registered, and insured items) at the 18th St. Postal Store."

"We apologize for any inconvenience our Bryant Street location may have caused you," he concluded.

Smarter business, smarter service

"This is a wonderful reversal of a bad decision on the part of the post office," said Albert Heil, a 28-year Castro resident "Heil, like the

thousands of area residents that have relied on the services of the original Eureka Valley post office, believes "you can make a difference. You just have to stick your neck out there and say, hey, this is a better way. It's not that difficult to be smart, and the post office wants to prove that it is," he said.

"Either the post office wants to make sure that P.O. Plus doesn't wind up getting its business," Heil continued, "or they really care. Hopefully this issue shows how people can really work it out. It's far out."

Castro residents who have already become accustomed to the retail direction of the new Postal Store will, for better or worse, still be able to purchase items like key chains, coffee mugs, and Sissy Spacek stamps.

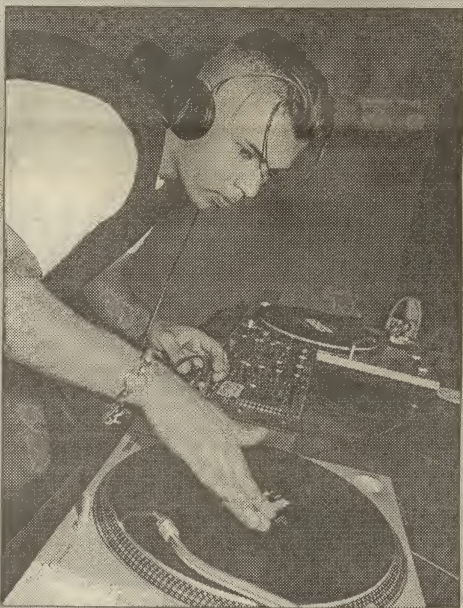
The competition between Castro's new Postal Store and P.O. Plus signals, in San Francisco as

well as in cities nationwide, a new era of competition between public sector and private sector businesses. The U.S. Postal Service first began its new retail orientation in Minnesota's Mall of America in 1996. Since then Postal Stores have replaced more functional post offices at an ever-increasing pace.

"Let's just hope they play fair and that greed won't ever again cause an interruption in essential services like sending and receiving packages," Heil concluded. "Keep thinking globally and acting locally." ▼

Residents of other San Francisco neighborhoods interested in future plans for area U.S. post offices may contact the postmaster by writing to San Francisco Postmaster, San Francisco, CA 94188-9998.

iViva la música!



Vinyl master DJ Homer X-pinoso regulated the dance beats at Proyecto Contra SIDA por Vida's "Freaky Fiesta" on Dec. 19. Open to queer Latino youth, ages 18-25, the party was one of four that take place each year, providing a safe space for dancing, food, and socializing. For more information about the project, phone 864-7278.

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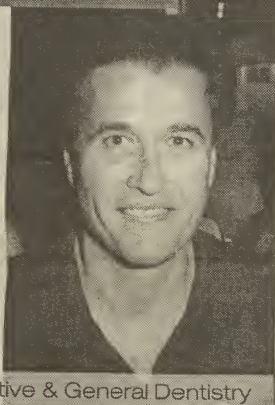
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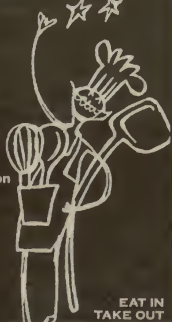
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Members of the building committee of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav carried Torahs into their new building during a dedication ceremony last Sunday, Dec. 20. The service coincided with Hanukkah and included a menorah lighting, singing, dancing, and food. Nearly 300 people attended. The synagogue was established to serve primarily the lesbian and gay community.

SF Greek Orthodox church affirms gays

by Vicky Kolakowski

In a small chapel owned by Trinity Episcopal Church in San Francisco, a small miracle is happening each Sunday morning. A group of Orthodox men and women are worshipping in a new congregation, Saints Theodore and Theodore, that affirms all people, including gays and lesbians.

Orthodox churches are generally very traditional, and one tradition that has been strong is a belief in the sinfulness of homosexuality. A meeting of American Greek Orthodox in 1992 adopted a statement reaffirming that position and encouraging "assistance" be given to help identify and overcome homosexual feelings, and urging denial of sacraments to those "who still want to justify their behavior" after being told of this doctrine.

At the World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe earlier this month, a Russian Orthodox delegate, Vladimir Shmaliy, led an unsuccessful fight to remove gay and lesbian inclusion from consideration at future WCC gatherings.

So in the summer of 1994, Bishop Elias Shynkevitch and others who wanted a more affirming worship community created



Bishop Elias Shynkevitch

the Fellowship of Saints Sergius and Bacchus, named after a pair of fourth century martyrs admired by many gay men for their strong and devout love for each other.

The group met weekly, and led to the founding of Saints Theodore Tiro and Theodore Stratilates Independent Greek Orthodox Mission.

The church has attracted up to two dozen worshippers on Sundays, and 40 at Easter, a mixed group of gay and straight Orthodox who find the loving acceptance and modern changes attractive, such as performing the regular liturgy in English.

"As a Living Church," Shynkevitch wrote in a statement in October 1997, "it is not static, not unchanging."

This is a view held by congregants as well. Christopher Katis, a member who felt uncomfortable with the traditional Orthodox churches, is excited about Sts. Theodore and Theodore.

"The congregation hopes to see its numbers grow in the coming years, and to become a church which embraces a 21st century view of the world while maintaining an Orthodox view about faith," Katis told the *Bay Area Reporter*. "A church where Orthodox—Greek, Bulgarian, Russian, etc.—and non-Orthodox, can worship in a supportive and inclusive atmosphere." ▼

Saints Theodore and Theodore Independent Greek Orthodox Mission worships each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. in a chapel on Gough between Austin Alley and Bush, next to Trinity Episcopal Church. A special Orthodox Christmas service will be held on Wednesday, January 6 (Orthodox Christmas Eve) from 9 p.m. until early Christmas Day. Call (415) 487-6626 for more information.

Katz to offer American perspective to queer students in Amsterdam

by Cynthia Laird

Jonathan Katz, chair of the queer studies department at City College of San Francisco, is giving up life in the city for a semester and heading to Europe this week where he'll be a visiting professor at the University of Amsterdam. A leading queer studies professor at that school, Gert Hekma, is coming here to take Katz's place and teach at City College. Katz said he's planning to leave December 30.

Katz told the *Bay Area Reporter* that one of the goals of the exchange program is to provide students here with a European perspective on gay and lesbian studies, and to provide students in Amsterdam with an American

view of queer studies. "We'd like to build on that and eventually have a program reflect international issues facing queer studies today," said Katz.

There's another goal, as the exchange program is more than two professors trading places; Katz said he hopes it will set the groundwork for future exchanges that will hopefully involve students at the two schools.

While Katz is in Europe, he intends to visit England, France, and Germany to encourage universities in those countries to offer gay and lesbian studies. "I'll be trying to promote the institutionalization of gay and lesbian studies," he said.

City College's queer studies department was the first such department in the world; today it remains the largest. Next semester,

which runs from January 20 to May 28, there will be 29 queer studies classes offered, Katz said.

For students interested in taking classes in the queer studies department, Katz said that people can sign up on the first night of class. Classes are held in the evenings at Everett Middle School, 450 Church Street at 17th Street.

In other news, Katz said City College is offering a new AIDS course next semester, "AIDS in America." The class will be taught by Lisa Wade. ▼

For information and a brochure about classes in the queer studies department, call (415) 239-3876 or check out the website at <http://www.ccsf.cc.ca.us/queer>.

LGADDA Kwanzaa celebration Wednesday

by Cynthia Laird

Lesbians and Gays of African Descent for Democratic Action (LGADDA) will host its seventh annual celebration of Kwanzaa, a weeklong holiday recognizing and strengthening the bonds of family, friends, and community among all people of African heritage, at the main branch of the San Francisco Public Library on Wednesday, December 30.

All interested community members are invited to attend the free event in the library's Koret Auditorium. LGADDA will host the celebration in association with the library's African-American and Gay and Lesbian centers.

Developed and initiated more than 30 years ago by Dr. Maulana Ron Karenga, Kwanzaa is a week-long spiritual, festive, and joyous African-American celebration of the oneness and goodness of life that has grown in popularity across the country and internationally. The holiday begins Saturday, December 26, and is centered around seven principles (Nguzi Sabas), with an emphasis on unity and re-dedication to manifesting the principles in daily life. The principles are: Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics),



The City of Refuge Choir performed at last year's Kwanzaa ceremony at the Main Library

Nia (purpose), Kuumba (creativity), and Imani (faith).

Organizers said that last year's event was well attended and hope for a good turnout this year. In addition to observing Kwanzaa, LGADDA members hope the event will increase the organization's exposure and add people to its roster.

LGADDA was formed in January 1992 to give a political voice to the concerns and needs of lesbians and gays of African descent in the Bay Area. The group has,

over the years, formed coalitions with other organizations on issues of mutual concern to overcome racism and promote economic and social justice. ▼

The Kwanzaa celebration begins at 5 p.m. at the New Main Library, at the corner of Larkin and Grove streets, one block from the BART and Muni Civic Center station. For more information e-mail rgoins@ziplink.net.

Migden launches new bid for HIV reporting

United Press International

California's lame duck Governor Pete Wilson vetoed a bill earlier this year that would have required the reporting of HIV cases, but the legislation was reintroduced Monday, December 21 with support from new federal guidelines.

Assemblywoman Carole Migden, (D-San Francisco), announced its reintroduction two weeks before Democrat Gray Davis succeeds Wilson as governor.

Migden says new guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urge states to go beyond the reporting of AIDS cases to track people infected with HIV, the virus may precede it.

Her bill would authorize an identification system that uses a cryptic code to report HIV cases to local health departments while keeping patients' names confidential.

Migden says federal officials are offering to help states develop HIV reporting systems that conceal the names of patients by assigning them numbers. She says the idea is to improve data collection while protecting patients' privacy.

Several other states have used to the coded reporting system or are developing it.

Others have adopted name-based systems and rejected coded identifiers on grounds that they make it too difficult to find the partners of HIV patients and save lives.

Present law requires people diagnosed with an AIDS-defining condition to be reported to local

health departments by name, but not those who carry the virus that may precede it. ▼

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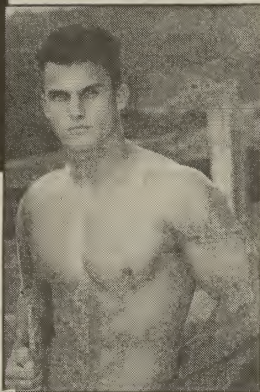


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OPEN FORUM

All we want for Christmas

Forgive us if we don't sound terribly charitable toward our fellow humans, but we think there's nothing quite as frightening as a mob of immature brats screaming at the tops of their lungs for the present of the present — this season's chosen gift that is believed to bestow coolness and happiness upon the recipient. And no, we don't mean Beany Baby-demanding kids. We mean the meany-baby demanding supposed adults in the House of Representatives who demanded impeachment this year.

The people who railroaded that maneuver through the House are too old to be considered juveniles anywhere except in operatic or kabuki settings ... like Congress. Still, it must be agreed that as a group they have displayed behavior that is both juvenile and delinquent, and they need to be spanked, at least, and possibly incarcerated for the safety of the rest of us.

Happily for the country, this is a season when that sort of behavior gets played out on a smaller scale during the holidays, so we're all really familiar with it. Sooner or later everyone is forced to listen to a spoiled or tired child spitting frustrated sobs like poison darts at its parents in public, because they won't buy it a Furby or Barbie or Beemer or whatever. By December, we've become so inundated with those increasingly strident wishes/wants/requests/demands for presents that everyone knows nothing stills an outburst of childish behavior better than ignoring it. So the country didn't react with shock or horror when the House members erupted into their bawling, stamping, demanding, tantrum. Instead, the collective response seems to be that of a parent going deadly silent before saying sternly, "You are in big trouble, Mister!"

It doesn't look like America is going to forget this public scene, the humiliation in front of our neighbors, and the arrogant recklessness. The Republicans who voted for impeachment (and the few Democrats, too) are, we think, in big trouble, Mister. They may want to start looking for digs in their home districts, because we've already seen a big push to turn them all out of office.

That won't be possible for two years, but

in the meantime contempt and unrelenting pressure will go a long way toward instructing the Senate what it should learn from the House's example.

One of the lessons we hope has been made abundantly clear is the old adage "Be careful what you wish for, because you might get it." Or as Stephen Sondheim put it, "Are you certain what you wish is what you want? ... Wishes come true — not free." Now many of our leaders have started getting exactly what they said they wanted, and are finding out that there are stiff payments coming due.

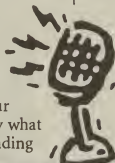
We hope the trend continues, and therefore ask Santa to please bring these people exactly what they have said they want:

First, for Bill Clinton, the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy as it is practiced in Amer-

ica: where the only real prohibition is on telling, but asking is fair game and witch-hunts are commonplace;

For the Congressional Republicans, a world in which all past sins, no matter how small, disqualify them from public service; and where the possibility of any sex outside of the most strictly-defined traditional heterosexual marriage is cause for deep-pocket investigations; For the independent prosecutors, GOP councils, and all the rest of the attorneys who have raked in millions of dollars putting the country through this ordeal, a judicial system in which prevarications and circumlocutions become illegal and actionable, rather than the very thing that allows them to charge hundreds of dollars an hour;

And for everyone else, peace and quiet. God bless us, every one. ▼



Editorial



Why I'll be home for Xmas

by Kirk Read

My friend Tim gave deep blush, then lowered his voice as if to admit that he knew firsthand who killed Jon Benet Ramsey.

"I come from a boring, functional family," he offered.

"But you're from the South!" I cried in horror. "It must be so hard for you."

As a writer, I've not only accepted my crazy family, I've cashed in on them. Woe be unto the Southern writer whose clan isn't populated by drunks, flame throwing bigots and chaw spitting truckers.

Which brings me to my dilemma: What do you do when your estranged dysfunctional family starts talking to each other?

Used to be I could rely on my siblings for entertainment — condemnations at the dinner table, crashed cars, and boisterous fights declaring my childhood bedroom the "den of Satan."

But lately I've been getting phone calls and e-mail from some of the family members I'd branded as hopeless. It seems they're in 12 step groups, and they've come to the step where you make amends to the people you hurt repeatedly and brutally.

As thrilled as I am that all of this social change is rubbing off on the Read family, part of me liked the bigots. Hey, I'm a writer. I need material. What's so funny 'bout peace, love, and understanding?

I conjured an image of my entire family riding a recovery escalator, waving and shouting slogans at me. "Easy does it," they said, a little too cheerfully. "One day at a time." For a moment, I wanted to buy them a round of very dry martinis, no garnish.

This was my first holiday returning to old Virginny as someone who lives in San

Francisco, where everyone seems to be a transgender web designer into yoga and fisting. I've become their worst nightmare: a queer sex freak living a depraved homosexual lifestyle in the ghetto. Now they're cozying up. The truer I've been to myself as a gay man and kinky sexual being, the easier it's been for others to accept me. Go figure.

Ten years ago I came out to everyone in shouting distance, and the resistance and hostility made me tougher. "Wait till I write my book," I'd scream, taking copious notes during family feuds. Doors would slam, plates would break, and there I'd be: a 13 year-old transcribing verbatim the flotsam and jetsam of an oddly adult world.

I have always considered it a badge of honor that I survived born-again siblings. It made my ACT UP T-shirt that much more fun to wear home. Now they're telling me they were wrong, that they seek my forgiveness, and that they really were sorry about that poor Matthew Shepard boy. I have enough to worry about with holiday thank-you note writing; who needs the added stress of dealing with the Repentant?

As the saints go marching back into our lives, it's going to mean long, painful holiday chats. But trust me, honey, if my brothers can turn that corner, then there ain't a soul on the planet who's beyond repair.

Somewhat disillusioned by the respect and sharing being bandied about in my once boisterous household, I went to my hometown's local bar. There I found a heapload of high school classmates. Two of the guys, Adam and Stephen, had never moved away. Very *Breaking Away*. I sat with them, drinking cheap draft beer, discussing

the good old days: namely, the keg party I threw in 11th grade. I called the cops to break up my own party, because one uninvited drunken reveler called me a faggot. I then chased him out of my backyard with a hammer. It was time for everyone to go home.

After three pitchers, I turned to Adam and admitted that I'd had a crush on him in high school. I added that it was time for him to move out of his mother's basement and get a damn job. He blushed at both observations.

Stephen turned to me and said "You know, Kirk, I probably said some things about you in school that weren't too nice."

Indeed. We'd gone to pre-school together, and he holds the distinction of being one of the first to call me "faggot."

"But lemme tell you something. I think you're a helluva guy."

Was this another redneck apologizing to me? As if my family weren't enough, now I have to deal with social change in my hometown? Ugh!

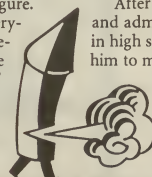
When the bill came, Adam and Stephen reached for it.

I wondered for a moment if there was social etiquette for tab-paying when atoning for prejudice. Then I kissed both of them on the cheek.

"Thanks," I said, and meant it.

They both blushed a deep red and looked around a little to see who'd witnessed the kisses. But they didn't rub them away. ▼

Kirk Read can be reached at
KirkRead@aol.com.



Guest Opinion

LETTERS

Faith without action is meaningless

As a member of Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco I feel compelled to respond to Anand's guest opinion "Wake Up to a Xmas Future" (December 17). Since I have been taught to pray with my eyes closed and he has chosen to write under a pseudonym, he makes it impossible to respond to his comments in person.

If he was given a cookie after arriving late for Simply Supper it was because that was all there was left to give. It would not have mattered what his appearance was. Any inference that was a criterion is false.

Pastoral prayer is not a part of the order of worship at MCC. There is a time for Community Prayer in which people are asked to join hands and express their prayers to God, Goddess, Divine spirit, or however they feel comfortable expressing their belief. The time to communicate needs to the pastoral staff is after the service when there is time to get a name and number. Actually communicating his needs to clergy or staff would have been far more productive than standing around waiting for someone to offer support. Expecting to find housing in two weeks by posting a notice at MCC might have been a little unrealistic. I know that the two gentlemen who own the flower shop at 18th and Diamond spent several months looking for affordable housing.

As Anand shows us, faith without action is meaningless, but I am mystified as to why it is necessary to attack the only Castro neighborhood church that provides a feeding program for the homeless. A perfect program? No, like anything a year old, we are still learning. Since the church is criticized by those who think it is doing too much and those like Anand who think it isn't doing enough, it must continue to find that middle ground.

I don't know any church that takes more seriously the "community" in their name than MCC-SF. I offer the following as just a few examples.

The person responsible for the "choir as choreographed as any Broadway show" shares his talent with the 250 students of Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy, a local elementary school that wouldn't have a music program without his efforts and the support of MCC.

Through partnership with Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy, MCC volunteers provide the same number of hours as a fulltime staff person. Monthly read-aloud volunteers provide additional reading experiences for every classroom.

There are 32 needy children who wouldn't experience the joy of the holiday season without the help of MCC members. I had a great time shopping for two kids I will never know.

The church provides volunteers for the Dore Alley, Folsom, and Castro Street Fairs.

The community Thanksgiving dinner sponsored with Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church provided over 300 meals for community members.

Bill Wilson
San Francisco

No compassion, no hope

Thanks for publishing the guest opinion from Anand, on his experience with homelessness in the Castro. Almost anyone could suffer reverses, like he did, and end up on the street. When there is no compassion, we are all at risk.

John S. James
San Francisco

Winning is tougher than filing

Au contraire, Editor Dearest. I did read the Morales article several times before responding ("Get a booger, go to jail," *Mailstrom*, December 17). I am quite well aware that the district attorney chose not to prosecute this case as there was no real evidence that the arrestee was indeed soliciting.

My letter was to point out that Mr. Morales is being led down a rocky and bumpy road by attorney Wotman. While there was no mention of seeking monetary damages, both real and punitive, I can't think of Wotman working for free in this type of case and another landmark one at that. Given the facts as stated in your published article, I cannot imagine a Fresno area jury buying a story that someone suffering from a cold and flu-like symptoms would choose to visit a public park on a chilly November afternoon looking for friends and ends up in a restroom offering to take a stranger on a tour of the park.

This case, if it reaches trial, will probably be held before a civil jury. There are no criminal charges involved. I was quite well aware of this at the time I wrote to you with my opinion.

Filing a case and seeking publicity is one thing, winning it is another. I think its going to be rather difficult in this matter to get an adult jury to accept another fairy tale.

Andrew Betancourt
San Francisco

STD prevention is cheap HIV prevention

As a member of the city's HIV Prevention Planning Council (HPPC) I see over \$13.5 million spent on HIV Prevention every year. I want to make a case for increased awareness, discussion and advocacy for Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) prevention and control in the city of San Francisco. Much effort and millions of dollars are spent on what I call "theoretical prevention methods" — i.e., PEP/Detuned Assays, needs assessments, etc. The focus needs to be on prevention that we know works and preferably within the medical model.

Let me throw out a few questions for you to think about. A person who tests positive for HIV is already dealing with a compromised immune system. Do we want their body to be fighting other battles at the same time it is fighting HIV without even being aware of it? Doesn't it make sense that each person should be screened for hidden STDs and then for parasites and then inoculated for TB, Hepatitis A & B, etc.? Each person (HIV+ or HIV-) should be treated to clear those infections and then referred if necessary.

This is cost effective, basic prevention that we know works and immediately improves the quality of life for the individual. We either invest in the preventive costs like these or rely on very toxic and expensive drugs that have yet to prove their long term side-effects and efficacy. The choice is simple.

Not only is STD prevention inexpensive and cost effective there is substantial biological evidence demonstrating that the presence of STDs increases the likelihood of both transmitting and acquiring HIV. So the question that needs to be asked is: Why in an epidemic that is predominately sexually transmitted are medical providers not routinely obtaining a sexual history or automatically screening for hidden, curable STDs? Why doesn't the Department of Public Health issue a public health mandate that private medical offices have such screening as part of their protocol, especially for those who have tested positive for HIV? If not, why not?

In a city full of scientists and researchers and money for research, when will a study be conducted that targets men who have sex with men that will actually benefit these participants with a healthier immune system by screening, treating, and clearing these curable STDs?

What can you do? Get screened and treated for hidden STDs (even if you don't feel you have one). Get screened for parasites. Get inoculated for TB, Hepatitis A & B. Advocate for STD screening, parasite screening, inoculations at every health center and every HIV anonymous test site. Call Dr. Jeffrey Klausner, Director of STD Prevention & Control for the City of San Francisco at 554-8450 to offer constructive input into providing these critically necessary services.

Shawn O'Hearn
San Francisco

Queer in public

In response to the sometimes absurd and recently oftentimes wordy debate over the journalistic preference for "queer," while I do acknowledge journalism today is a vast and nebulous world, I still understand it must adhere to a few rules. Say, choosing words based on their accepted (i.e. dictionary) definitions: I would think someone unfamiliar with a word that she reads in a newspaper or other literary vehicle might look it up in the dictionary. Thus, "a queer boy from Hayes Valley" might be misinterpreted as "a deviating from the expected or normal/strange" boy from Hayes Valley." In my edition of the *American Heritage Dictionary*, the last entry for "queer" is "Offensive Slang. Used as a disparaging term for a gay or homosexual person." Hm. Offensive slang. Just like the use of "queer" scrawled on a recent victim's body. In my opinion, that poor man's victimizers knew exactly their word choice when they inscribed their hate upon his torso.

Even in the above definition of "queer" my dictionary uses the adjective "gay" as a synonym for "homosexual." And it defines a person as having the potentiality of being described gay — not just a male.

While I realize the dictionary is not the end-all for societal definitions and is constantly evolving itself, these definitions in my mind represent popular thinking and accepted terminology for journalistic and literary standards today.

Let us call each other "fag" and "queer" and "dyke" outside the newspaper, where body language, intonation, context, and circumstance will unmistakably convey the meaning of empowerment we imply when we use of these words. Let's not confuse or confound ourselves in the structured, unopinionated, and unbiased world of the printed news.

Charles Xavier
San Francisco

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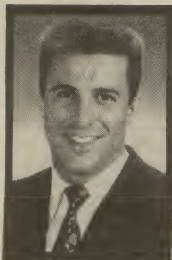
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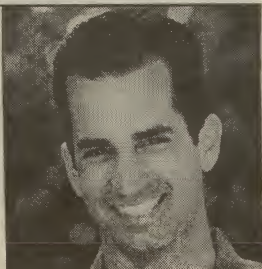
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YANKEE CLIPPER TRAVEL

ESPN's drama of the gay athlete

by Liz Tracey, GLAAD publications manager

Sports cable station ESPN broadcast *Outside The Lines: The World of The Gay Athlete* on December 16, examining the issues facing professional athletes both in and out of the closet.

Among the topics covered by the special were why are there no openly gay male players in major league sports? What's the difference between homophobia towards male athletes and female sports figures? How do rumors about an athlete's sexual orientation affect their career? In addition, interviews with a high school football player dealing with his gayness, a "closeted" college athlete, and a profile of Oberlin College's Mike Musca, who is the first openly gay university athletic director. Also included were openly lesbian tennis stars Martina Navratilova and Billie Jean King.

Along with the show, which is part of an ongoing series by ESPN, a special three-part web series appeared on their website (<http://www.ESPNsportszone.com>) using text, sound, and video clips from the show. The site also provided unique takes on the topic: openly gay comic Ant talks about sports and gay men; a history timeline of out lesbian and gay athletes, and the findings of a survey regarding sports figures, homosexuality, and how the public might perceive an athlete who came out.

Please contact ESPN and thank them for this important coverage of our community and sports, and the homophobia that still confronts them on a daily basis.

Contact Mr. John Wildhack, Senior VP of Programming and Mr. Craig Lazarus, Producer, *Outside the Lines*, ESPN, 935 Middle Street, Bristol, CT 06010, fax: (860) 585-2213, feedback form: <http://ESPN.SportsZone.com/site/tools/contact/letterspn.html>.

Insult to injury

In the December 21 issue of *Newsweek* magazine, Mark Miller writes "The Final Days and Nights

Of a Gay Martyr." Instead of Miller using the more than 1,000 words to explore a hate crime that has left a nation still reeling, he uses the space to draw a gratuitous and unflattering picture of Matthew Shepard, with little or no valuable information or analysis added to the discussion surrounding his brutal death.

The article quotes "[e]xclusive interviews with some of his closest friends," who state that "Shepard was drinking more and fighting a slow slide into despair, even though he was taking prescription drugs to control depression." It then recounts one friend's tale of Shepard's having been sexually assaulted on a trip abroad, and on a night when they went out together, how he had planned to commit suicide by "taking all his meds," finally calming down after hours of talking. Miller then recounts the stories of a "limo driver" who had driven Shepard to a gay bar in Colorado, and whom Shepard befriended shortly before his murder. Miller describes Shepard as "lonely and eager for human contact," and writes that he may have been an easy target because of the depression, drugs, and alcohol.

Sadly, what *Newsweek* has done is drawn a picture right out of Jacqueline Susann's *Valley of the Dolls*, of a young man sliding towards his demise on a road strewn with emotional problems, substance abuse, and a "party boy" mentality. A more valuable story might have taken the opportunity to examine the loneliness and isolation that Shepard must have felt in Laramie as a young gay man, and the difficulties many gay youth have with these very issues. The intent of the writer can only be conjectured: did he intend to deflate the "mythology" of Matthew Shepard? Did he mean to tell a cautionary tale a la "Looking For Mr. Goodbar?" Whatever their intent, *Newsweek* and Miller manage to denigrate and insult the memory of a dead young man who suffered at the hands of two whose hatred knew no bounds, not because he liked to go out dancing and find friends, but because he was gay and not ashamed.

Write to *Newsweek* and tell them this coverage was disrespectful and gratuitous.

Contact Mark Whitaker, Managing Editor, *Newsweek*, 251 West 57th St., New York, NY 10019, fax: (212) 445-4120, e-mail: letters@newsweek.com (be sure to include name, address, and phone number with all letters)

Homophobia begins at home

In the December 16-22 edition of the *Village Voice*, Editor Richard Goldstein writes about the intersection of homophobia and masculinity in a fascinating, erudite and exceptionally intelligent essay entitled "The Hate That Makes Men Straight: Psychoanalysts probe the roots of homophobia."

The discussion around the phobia as an actual pathology is still debated by clinicians, and the author asks if it may be a tool through which boundaries are defined for masculinity. Goldstein posits this, noting that "the fear of being perceived as gay holds guys together." Explicating this through example (boys on the playground, adolescents and dress codes) the article then explores the idea that homophobia, while certainly enforcing male power, "has nothing to do with loving women. But it has everything to do with fear of femininity."

Please contact the *Village Voice* and thank them for this deeply thoughtful, and thought-provoking examination of a topic which receives too little attention in the media. Goldstein's very insightful writing of this piece shows the value in doing exactly that.

Contact Doug Simmons, Managing Editor, *Village Voice*, 36 Cooper Square, New York, NY 10003, fax: (212) 475-8944, e-mail: editor@villagevoice.com.

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POLITICS

Hell to the Chief

by Wayne Friday

In early November, after Democrats defied both history and political prognosticators by picking up five House seats and avoiding the loss of a single U.S. Senate seat in the off-year general elections, even **Bill Clinton's** most ardent political foes thought the "Comeback Kid" had successfully dodged the most serious crisis of his political life. A month ago - even a couple of weeks ago - impeachment looked totally out of the question. However, Congressional Republicans were hell-bent on ousting a president they despise, and decided to ignore the obvious will of the American voters. On Saturday, December 19, in a partisan fashion never seen before, House members narrowly voted to impeach President William Jefferson Clinton on two counts, and send the entire mess to a trial before the U.S. Senate.

It was only the second presidential impeachment in history, the first in 130 years, and the first-ever of an elected president.

What happens now? Well, as I understand it, unless the White House and Democratic Party leaders can reach some kind of a compromise involving a bipartisan censure (with the cooperation, of course, of the Senate GOP leaders), the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court would preside over a trial, probably convened shortly after the 106th Congress is sworn in next month. The stumbling block for Clinton here is that the GOP Senate Majority Leader **Trent Lott** is adamantly against any kind of censure deal being worked out before the start of a Senate trial. And on the Democratic side of the aisle, West Virginia's elder statesman Senator **Robert Byrd** has already expressed his displeasure with pre-trial maneuvering by the White House.

Once the trial starts, any of the 100 senators can make a motion at any time to totally dismiss the proceedings and thereby end the trial completely; a simple majority of senators (51 members) could vote to end the trial. The new Senate will still have 55 Republicans and 45 Democrats, so for that strategy to work the Democrats would have to hold all their own votes and convince six GOP members to go along with them. That isn't likely to happen because there are at least a couple of hard-line Democratic senators (like Byrd) who feel that once a trial starts in the Senate, it must run its course and bring the entire body to a final vote on the president's fate.

President Clinton and Democratic leaders very much fear that if a prolonged trial (some say it could take up to six months) becomes inevitable, the pressure will begin to mount very quickly for the president's resignation. Despite his adamant statements that he will never resign, some close to this president feel that before he puts the country through a wrenching trial that could tie the government up for months, he would, despite his public pronouncements now, step down and let **Al Gore** become president.

Most of my readers will likely disagree, but I still see this even-



Representative Tom Campbell

tually happening. The "Comeback Kid" might not be able to make his one final comeback, but even that may work to the disadvantage of the GOPs who hate him so much. If they think it would be easy to defeat "President" Gore in 2000, they should think again before pushing Clinton, warts and all, out of office.

Politics and people

Another "moralist" Republican leader bites the dust: **Robert Livingston**, I presume, is just another in a long line of Republicans to get caught with his pants down (no less than three women, I'm told, were looking to the tabloids to spill the beans on this guy for the right kind of bucks). Oh, well, what goes around, eh?

Remember when we thought GOP Representative **Tom Campbell** of the Peninsula's 15th District was a "moderate?" Well, the guy that so many gay and lesbians thought was a "friend" showed his true colors last week by talking with right wing whip **Tom DeLay**, getting in lockstep, and succumbing to the religious right leadership of his party. Campbell, considered a different type of Republican than **Newt Gingrich**, **Dick Armey**, **Lott**, and **DeLay**, still wants to be a senator, but knows he couldn't get past the radical right that controls his party in this state to win the GOP nomination. His vote to impeach Clinton last week was the first step in his "suck up" effort to win the support of those **Lou Sheldon** types that now pull the strings in the California Republican Party. (Hey, Tom, ask **Matt Fong** what happens when you kiss ass with the Sheldon wing of the state GOP.)

According to *George* magazine, Oakland's Mayor-elect, **Jerry Brown** was overheard telling Governor-elect **Gray Davis** that the first thing he wanted to do as mayor was to secede from California; eager to rid himself of the mercurial gadfly, Davis reportedly responded "just hand me the papers, Jerry and show me where to sign."

And if anyone had any doubt about the once and future intentions of lame duck Governor **Pete Wilson**, he told a reporter in Sacramento last week he "really does still want to be president." Wilson added, "You ought to have reasons to want to hold the office,

and I do - there are changes that are needed at the national level and that's the place to make them."

It's that time of the year again - let me take this opportunity to wish the best of the holiday season and a healthy, prosperous New Year to **Rick Ridolfi**; **Bob Ross**; **Bryan James**; **Jack Davis**; **Sue Bierman**; **Dennis Collins**; **Tom Ammiano**; **Ted Fang**; **Lillian Sing**; **Willie Brown**; **Elizabeth Colton**; **Tom Horn**; **Wendy & Frank Jordan**; **Mark Leno**; **Morgan, Greg & the staff at The Bar on Castro**; **James Fang**; **Larry Bush**; **Cecil Williams & Jan Mirikitani**; **Arlo Smith**; **Ken Cady & David Tan**; **Allen White**; **Art & Sherry Agnos**; **Julie Tang**; **Carole Migden & Chris Arguedas**; **Teddy Hirshfield**; **Kevin McCarthy**; **Susan Breall**; **Doris Ward**; **Randy Alfred**; **Richard Walters**; **Phil Matier**; **Robert Golovich**; **Larry Epipinette**; **Kevin W. & Paul Johnson**; **Marge Poscher**; **Kay Tsengin**; **Carol Stuart**; **Margo St. James**; **Dan & Donna Addario**; **Jeff Sheehy**; The gang at the **Polk Rendezvous**; **Robert Barnes**; **Angela Alioto**; **Bella**; **Jim Bonko**; **Cheryl Crane**; **Steve Cox**; **Harry Britt**; **DeeDee & everyone at Aunt Charley's**; **Herb Donaldson**; **Mike & Beverly Hennessey**; **Sharon McNight**; **Richard Kutner**; **Dianne Feinstein & Dick Blum**; **Don Rogers & the gang at Ginger's Trois**; **Warren Hinckle**; **Mike Housh & Rick Procurer**; **Fredrick Hobson**; **Chuck Haines**; **Katherine Feinstein & Rick Mariano**; **Mr. Lincoln**; **Leslie Katz**; **Susan Leal**; **Louise & Paul Renne**; **Carolene Marks**; **Paul Melbostadt**; **Michael O'Malley**; **Jim Rivaldo**; **Connie O'Connor**; **Tom Soucie**; **Dick Pabich**; **Leiland Yee**; **Ed Petrillo & Eric Johnson**; **Everyone at Polk Street's Giraffe**; **John Heilman**; **Danny Niccoletta**; **Nancy & Paul Pelosi**; **John Burton**; **Rod McKuen**; **Hector, Gardner & Ed**; **Ron Ross**; **Jay Noonan**; **Kevin Shelley**; **George Kohn**; **Fred Lau**; **Ellen Chaitin & V. Roy Lefcourt**; **Barney Frank**; **Joe Bannon**; **Barbara & Stu Boxer**; **Annemarie Conroy**; **Terence & Lisa Hallinan**; **Ginger & the staff at Marlena's**; **Steve Rascher**; **Charlie LaMorte**; **Carol Ruth Silver**; **Audrey Moy**; **Tom Nolan**; **Susie & Hadley Roff**; **Victor Marquez**; **Ronny Lynn**; **Harry Low**; and, in particular, **Mike Salinas** and the great staff at the **B.A.R.** - my very best to all. ▼



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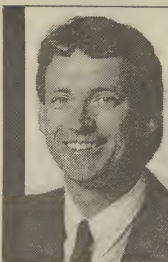
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Carol up!

by Nancy Boutilier

Between the impeachment proceedings and the bombing of Iraq, it's hard to find holiday cheer. That unlikely flurry of snow we had over the weekend brought a moment of the magic that is possible in this world.

People appeared on stoops and paused from their shopping to revel in the windy winter wonderland display. Tongues reached out for flakes. Children danced. People of all ages stood with palms and eyes turned skyward. It was a beautiful reprieve from the snowjob we're getting from our government, as if the Grinch had returned to carve the roast beast.

Friends recently invited me to join their annual caroling expedition through our neighborhood. I jumped at the opportunity to don me now my gay apparel in a family crowd. So, warmed with egg nog, off I went into the coldest night of the year for a seasonal sing-along.

Oh come, all ye faithful. ... I did my best, really I did. But jingle bells strapped to my belt loop and all, I just couldn't fit in. The polite little excursion through my hillside neighborhood felt too ... traditional. While I had thought holiday tradition was exactly what I had been searching for, like a little stroll down It's a Wonderful Life Lane, once I got there, I knew I was in the wrong movie.

I found myself wanting to whistle down cars on Market Street in rush hour and carol, not to them, but at them. I had the urge to plaster neon stickers along the way to grandmother's house: "Singing is a right, not a privilege." "Another caroler for choice," and, of course, "Carol Up, Fight AIDS!"

Why was no one carrying a sign that read, "Matthew is our Shepard. He died for your sins?" Instead, we would ring the bell and the door would open to our merry rendition of "O, Holy Night" while I would be poised to throw a pie or chant "Shame, Shame, Shame." At one point, I transposed some lyrics and actually sang "Away in my anger..." and knew that it was time to duck out before I started in with "Bah Humbug!"

On return to my wreathless home I watched *The X-Files* and drifted off to sleep with visions of Dana Scully dancing through my head. Before I had time to fantasize about seducing Dana, I woke to eerie music and the bark of my dog. Standing between me and the television was Fox Mulder in chains. He told me to prepare myself for three visitors from the beyond, then he disappeared into a white light.

I decided it had been a nightmare and tried to return to sleep, but there was a knock at the back of the house. A woman I'd never seen before was floating outside my second-story window. She was dressed in elegant '60s bohemian wear. I opened the window.

"I am the ghost of Oval Offices Past," she said reaching in to place a hand on my shoulder. The next thing I knew, we were at the Oval Office Christmas party in Kennedy's White House. There was a vat of chowder on the table



and a trash can of Skip-and-Go-Naked Punch beside it, complete with the hockey stick to stir it with.

"I represent a long invisible line," my ghost said. Then she pointed to a woman on JFK's lap. "There I am, Mary Bradlee Meyer. Washington was a fraternity party in those days. Jack and I didn't mind when James Truitt leaked the story to the *National Enquirer*. No one believed what they read in supermarkets back then. Jackie certainly chose not to believe. My brother, Ben Bradlee, was well connected. "You were the president's mistress?" I asked.

"Sure, who wasn't? I once left my slip behind in the Green Room. Jack mailed it back to me in a White House envelope."

"Why haven't you told your story?" I questioned.

"I was murdered in 1964," she reported. "The man charged was acquitted, but I'm not here to tell my story."

"Then why are you here?"

"To show you that the White House has always been a place of deceit and philandering," she replied.

"I already knew that," I said.

"Then why is your generation trying to impeach a president for what has always been there?"

"It's his lying that has him in trouble," I said. "Besides, what can I do about it?"

"You'll have to ask your next visitor..." and off she went, up into the night sky. When I look back down around me, I realized I was standing at my window again. I must have been sleepwalking, I thought to myself.

"Hey, like, who are you?" a voice came from behind me.

I turned to connect this new voice with the body of a young woman. She wore a simple blue dress, That Girl hair, and a smile that looked as long and as white as the keys of a grand piano.

"Monica!" I exclaimed.

"Not exactly," she said with a bit of a pout.

"Let me guess, the ghost of the Oval Office Present?"

"Lousy title, isn't it? I thought the Big Creep could have at least found me an ambassadorship in some country with sunshine and beaches."

"You sound spiteful, Monica."

"Hey, you're the one without holiday cheer, carrying a bah humbug spirit. I just want a vaca-

tion," she spit back in my face.

"So is that why you are here, to help me with my holiday blues?"

"Not exactly."

"Then why?"

"Vernon sent me."

Not even Ebenezer Scrooge had to put up with this, I thought to myself in exasperation and in that very instant, the spell broke. Monica disappeared and I heard singing. Da hoo dooryay. Da hoo dooryay.

I ran to the window that overlooked the sidewalk. There in the winter night stood a flock of carolers unlike any I'd seen before, the most magical mix with ornate costumes of all kinds and hats, enormous hats, hats shaped like skyscrapers and toy drums, decorated with tinsel and tum-tum. It was the queerest and most inspiring little troop of troubadours I'd ever seen, and they were singing just for me.

Are you the ghosts of Oval Offices to come?" I asked, excited to discover that this was the face of future presidential affairs.

"Ghosts? No, we're Beach Blanket Bethlehem."

"What year is this?" I asked.

"It's Christmas Eve, 1998," one of them offered in return.

"Are you sure? If it's 1998, then who is *Time* magazine's Man of the Year?" I challenged.

"In an act lacking imagination and hope, they named Bill Clinton and Kenneth Starr," said a second caroler.

"What happened to Matthew Shepard? I voted for him. I thought he was winning in the online poll."

"It was only one more of those ploys to make you think that the people's opinions really matter. Another exercise in futility," said a third.

Wait a minute then. Where is the ghost that will restore my hope, my faith, my charity? You can't tell me there will be no more philandering in the White House! Where are the ghosts of Oval Offices to come?

"What's with the ghost theme? Are you a pagan of some kind? a witch? We were just heading to the Bay Bridge to stop some traffic, scrawl some graffiti, and misdirect our anger at strangers. Want to join us?"

I considered the invitation for a moment.

"Maybe next year," I said. For now I think I'll cuddle up with my girlfriend and our pets to watch *The X-Files* reruns. Our best hope is believing that there are aliens among us and that some things are simply unexplainable. ▼

Generation Xq28

by Simon LeVay, Ph.D.

The past retreats forever into darkness and doubt, but on occasion something — a long-lost letter, say — illuminates the fading scene like a lightning bolt. Such was the force of the recent discovery, based on DNA analysis of his descendants, that Thomas Jefferson fathered a child by one of his slaves. The denials of historians were swept away, and suddenly we could be near-certain about something that had seemed fated to remain the subject of eternal speculation.

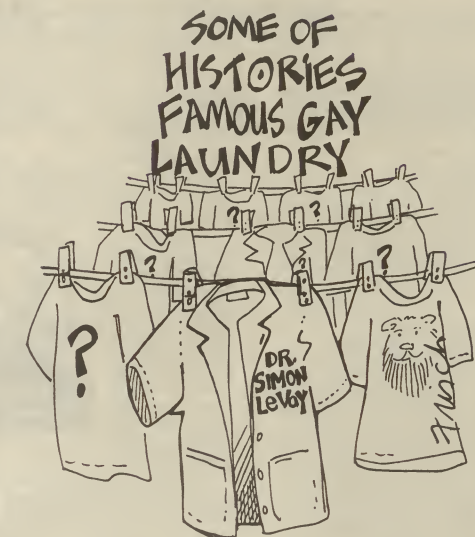
How desperately our own history cries out for such a stroke! The tale of our tribe is clouded, seemingly beyond recovery, by secrecy and denial. So can science cut through the claptrap and give us the bottom line — who was gay and who was straight? Not yet, but there are hints as to how it might be done.

Let's say we're interested in the brilliant, rich, aristocratic, never-married, and extraordinarily beautiful scientist-explorer Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), who gave his name to the ocean current that runs down the west coast of North America. You can kind of tell he was gay because his biographers spend so much time denying it. But can science nail it down? Well, it's probably too much to hope that his brain is sitting in a jar someplace, so we'll forget about checking out his hypothalamus. Instead, let's think about genes.

According to family studies by Richard Pillard of Boston University and his colleagues, having a gay brother makes a man's own chances of being gay about 20 percent — roughly a fivefold increase over his chances otherwise. So did Alexander have a gay brother? I had no idea five minutes ago, but a few keystrokes revealed that his older brother Wilhelm, founder of the University of Berlin, appears on a list of famous queers published by the German magazine *Frauennews*. (God bless the Internet!) I'm on the list too, so they got at least one right. Let's assume they're right about Willy too. Now we can put Alex's chances of being gay at 20 percent just by virtue of being Willy's kid brother.

According to National Cancer Institute geneticist Dean Hamer, a significant part of the reason homosexuality runs in families is that there's a gene influencing male sexual orientation on the X chromosome: it lies in a particular region of the chromosome named Xq28. In some families at least, the gay brothers have a "gay" version of the gene and the straight brothers have a "straight" version. The two alternative genes are inherited from one or the other of the two X chromosomes of their mother.

Knowing this, we could raise the odds on Alex being gay if we could show that Willy and Alex got their Xq28's from the same one of their mother's two X chromosomes. So we need genetic indicators linked to the X chromosome. One example is colorblindness, which is controlled by genes not far away from the probable location of Hamer's "gay gene." If the Humboldt brothers had both been colorblind, that would have suggested that they inherited the



same DNA in that general region of the chromosome, including the same "gay gene." They weren't, unfortunately for us. More and better indicators will come

to light, however, as the Human Genome Project plows its way along the X chromosome. Since we have detailed biographies of both men, as well as drawings and paintings of them at various stages of life, there is a good chance that we will be able to tell whether they shared physical, mental, or health-related traits mediated by genes located near the "gay gene."

Such a study could raise the chances of Alex being gay to as much as 40 percent — a tenfold increase over his chances otherwise. And this is without taking any of the historical evidence for Alex's homosexuality into account. Still, a 100 percent certainty may be unreachable, even if we opened Alex's grave and found some still-intact DNA. That's because genetic factors are not likely to be the entire basis of a person's sexual

orientation.

Under certain circumstances, the same approach could be used with more distant relatives than brothers, perhaps even including living descendants. Thus the necessity of identifying a gay brother could be eliminated. Given the pace at which biological research is progressing, even better ways may be found to point the finger at long-dead homos. But that of course will raise a dilemma: should we let Shakespeare, Goethe, and their kin rest in the closet that history has constructed for them, or should they be outed by the remorseless glare of science? ▼

Simon LeVay, Ph.D., is well known for his research on the "gay brain." He is author of *The Sexual Brain*, *City of Friends* (with Elisabeth Jonas), *Queer Science*, and the novel *Albrick's Gold*. For more Queer Science columns, visit www.gay.net. Contact LeVay at SLeVay@aol.com, or visit his home page, <http://members.aol.com/slevay>.

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Strong arms increasing

by Ron McGlashan

Saturday, December 5, 7:30 p.m., Van Ness at Eddy: A man visiting from Great Britain was attacked at the corner of Eddy and Van Ness by two men. The victim was attacked from behind as the suspects knocked him to the ground. The victim was kicked and struck on his head and face several times. There were eyewitnesses, but no one did anything to assist. San Francisco police were called and a report was taken at the scene. No suspects were found and there was no money stolen from the victim.

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Strong arm asks for light

Thursday, December 3, 1:45 a.m., Frank Norris at Polk Street: A man walking Frank Norris towards Polk was approached by a person who requested a light. The victim reached for his lighter, when the suspect demanded the victim's wallet.

The suspect told the victim that if he didn't hand over the wallet, he would be killed. The victim complied and the suspect ran down Frank Norris and turned onto Polk Street.

The suspect was not found.

Strong arm at O'Farrell and Larkin

Saturday, December 5, 5:15 p.m., O'Farrell and Larkin: A man was struck across the side of his head with an unknown blunt object and robbed as he left a corner store at the intersection of O'Farrell and Larkin streets. As he knelt to the ground, the suspect took his wallet and fled down Larkin Street. The police were called and a report was made. No suspects were found.

Aggravated assault on Van Ness

Sunday, December 6, 11:05 p.m., 1900 block of Van Ness: The owner of a service station saw three people in the parking area of the garage area shooting up drugs. He approached the people and asked them to leave the area.

One of the suspects struck the man across the face; at the same time, one of the other suspects produced what appeared to be a

gun and struck the man across the head again.

The suspects fled the area. Police were called and a report was made. No suspects were found in the area.

Armed robbery at service station

Sunday, December 13, 10:30 p.m., Turk and Franklin: A man wearing a dow wrap, hooded jacket, and sun glasses entered a service station at the intersection of Turk and Franklin streets. The suspect bought a piece of beef jerky and as the clerk opened the drawer to give the suspect his change, the suspect produced a sawed-off shotgun.

The employee handed over an undisclosed amount of cash and the suspect fled the area east-bound on Turk Street.

This was the third time in 15 days that this establishment had been robbed.

Theft from building

Monday, December 14, 12:09 p.m., Eddy and Polk: An employee of a restaurant notified the police that \$400 had been removed from the safe in the back of the establishment.

The owner of the store had been having problems with the safe for some time.

The money was placed in the safe at 5 p.m. and was discovered

missing three hours later. The police were called and a stolen property report was made. The crime lab was notified.

Suspect shot in Western Addition

Saturday, December 19, 6:30 p.m., 300 block of Oak: Two SFPD officers were making a routine traffic stop on the 300 block of Oak Street. The vehicle's driver did not comply with the order to stop, and a chase ensued through several red lights before the driver bailed out of his car.

Upon his exit from the vehicle, the man was ordered to stop and put his hands in the air. The suspect produced a small-caliber handgun and brandished the weapon in the direction of the officers.

The officers discharged their weapons and shot the suspect twice. He was transported to San Francisco General Hospital.

At press time, his name had not been released; he was reported to be in stable condition. ▼



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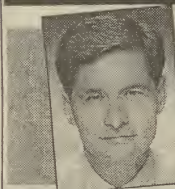
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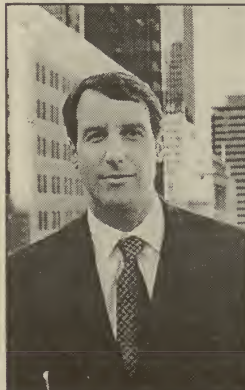
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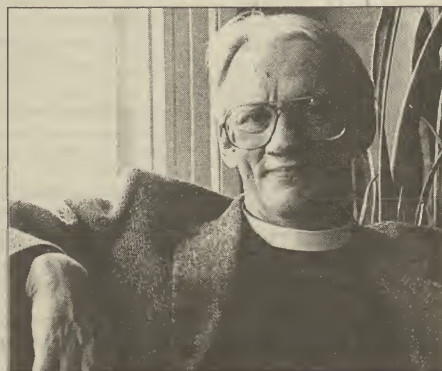
Christmas Eve, December 24, 1998

10:30 P.M. Christmas Music
11:00 P.M. Procession, Music and Holy Communion
Speaker: Robert Warren Cromey
Topic: Christmas-Humanity Glorified

Christmas Day, December 25, 1998

11:00 A.M. Carols and Holy Communion
12:30 P.M. Christmas Dinner
(Reservations for Dinner a must 775-1117, Free Will Offering)

Robert Warren Cromey, longtime gay/lesbian rights activist, is Rector of Trinity. He connects Christianity to our personal, social and political lives. He is the author of *In God's Image: The Need for Gay and Lesbian Rights in the Eyes of the Church.*



Call 415-775-1117

Blue Nitro could be classified as illegal substance, same as GHB

by Mark Norby

When the lights went out in San Francisco December 8, so did the prospects for a company trying to sell a substance similar in composition to Gamma Hydroxy Butyrate acid (GHB). That day a San Francisco man blacked out in a Castro store after consuming Blue Nitro, the liquid concoction distributed and marketed by Nutrition City Network, Inc.

As reported in last week's *Bay Area Reporter*, samples of Blue Nitro were distributed to several sex and head shops in San Francisco's gay neighborhoods. When law officers got word that a man had slipped into a coma after ingesting the liquid, the San Francisco General Hospital Poison Control Center quickly responded by submitting a sample of Blue Nitro to their labs for spectograph tests. The tests will verify all of Blue Nitro's component ingredients, including the level of Gamma Butyl Lactone (GBL), an ingredient that the human body metabolizes into GHB.

"It's quite possible," said Ron McGlashan with the public affairs office of the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD), "that people who used to deal GHB are pissed off because GHB is now illegal. They might have come up with their own substitutes and are pushing 'GHB-like' substances instead."

"The representative distributing Blue Nitro claimed that it has exactly the same effect as GHB. That's a scary claim to make," he added.

McGlashan emphasized that as

the New Year draws near — and with it, heavy partying — there is a tendency toward higher consumption of drugs and a corresponding need for potential users to know the dangers presented by all chemicals, drugs, alcohol, and unknown substances. "Hopefully this year people will have a higher awareness of the risks," he said. "We don't want to see a lot of people coming into the emergency rooms."

As many as 15 overdoses related to GHB consumption occur in San Francisco in a single weekend, McGlashan stated. "We always see a lot of people come into emergency rooms whenever there are holiday celebrations like New Year's. Big concerts are also a source of a high percentage of overdoses. Rave parties are the other big ones. Any time of year when there are a lot of people getting together to party, there is a tendency to overdo it. That's when the overdoses happen."

Because GHB is very difficult to detect when mixed into drinks with whiskey and scotch, bour-

bon, brandy, cognac, tequila, and blended drinks, the victim of an overdose might not be aware that the liquid had been consumed. Additionally, GHB is easy to manufacture, with recipes readily available over the Internet.

Frequent rape drug

Drug authorities and substance abuse agencies stressed the importance of not leaving drinks unattended when in bars and clubs. It is also important to know where the drink came from, especially when a drink is accepted from a stranger. GHB is the most common drug found in the blood of rape victims; Rohypnol (called "roofies" on the street) is a close second.

Since those drugs often lead to blackouts, leaving the user unaware of what might be occurring, drug agencies are concerned about the safety of any sex performed during intoxication. "A person high and unconscious on GHB would have no way of knowing if sex was protected or

page 23 ►

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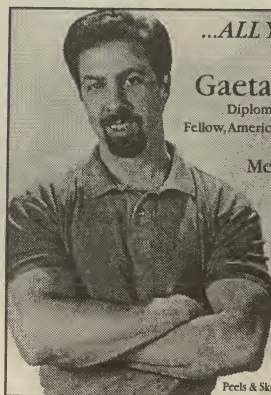
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One day science will create a pill for men's hair loss.

That day is today.

PROPECIA is a medical breakthrough — the first pill that effectively treats male pattern hair loss on the vertex (at top of head) and anterior mid-scalp area.

By all measures, the clinical results of PROPECIA in men are impressive:

- 83% maintained their hair based on hair count (vs. 28% with placebo).
- 66% had visible regrowth as rated by independent dermatologists (vs. 7% with placebo).
- 80% were rated as improved by clinical doctors (vs. 47% with placebo).
- Most men reported an increase in the amount of hair, a decrease in hair loss, and improvement in appearance.

*Based on vertex studies at 24 months of men 18 to 41 with mild to moderate hair loss.

Scientists have recently discovered that men with male pattern hair loss have an increased level of DHT in their scalps. PROPECIA blocks the formation of DHT and, in this way, appears to interrupt a key factor in the development of inherited male pattern hair loss in men. Importantly, PROPECIA helps grow natural hair — not just peach fuzz — and is as convenient to take as a vitamin: one pill a day.

For men who want to maintain and even increase hair count, today is a most exciting day. **Talk to your doctor.**

Only a doctor can determine if PROPECIA is right for you. PROPECIA is for **men only**. Further, women who are or may potentially be pregnant must not use PROPECIA and should not handle crushed or broken tablets because of the risk of a specific kind of birth defect. (See accompanying Patient Information for details.) PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling.

You may need to take PROPECIA daily for three months or more to see visible results. PROPECIA may not regrow all your hair. And if you stop using this product, you will gradually lose the hair you have gained. There is not sufficient evidence that PROPECIA works for recession at the temporal areas. If you haven't seen results after 12 months of using PROPECIA, further treatment is unlikely to be of benefit.

Like all prescription products, PROPECIA may cause side effects. A very small number of men experienced certain side effects, such as: less desire for sex, difficulty in achieving an erection, and a decrease in the amount of semen. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 2% of men. These side effects were reversible and went away in men who stopped taking PROPECIA. They also disappeared in most men (58%) who continued taking PROPECIA.

CALL 1-888-MERCK55 or visit our website at www.propecia.com today to receive detailed product information, including clinical "before and after" photographs.

Please read the next page for additional information about PROPECIA.

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The nation in review, 1998

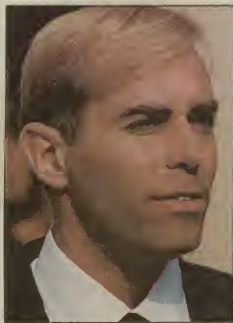
by Bob Roehr

In a year filled with sleaze, startling resignations, and the unimaginable of impeachment among the ignominies foisted upon the American people, one thing stands above all else for lesbians and gays: the name of **Matthew Shepard**.

The beating and virtual crucifixion of a then-unknown, physically slight young man, in a distant small town, exploded into the nation's consciousness. His death October 12 unleashed a torrent of commentary and rallies from the steps of the Capitol to places that had never before seen such an event over a gay cause.

It seemed to put the religious right on the defensive psychologically and it may have had a subtle impact upon the November 3 elections. But whether Shepard's martyrdom leads to passage of federal hate crime legislation remains an open question.

The Clinton administration continued its persecution of **gays and lesbians serving in the military** under the failed policy of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." That became most apparent in January when the Navy went after Timothy McVeigh with tactics a federal judge



Timothy McVeigh

later found to be unconstitutional.

The court reinstated the seaman. But when it became apparent that the Navy would not offer him job assignments worthy of his rank and experience, McVeigh accepted a settlement and retirement.

The *Able* case, the strongest legal challenge to the policy of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," had won in federal court at the trial level. But a yo-yoing back and forth to the appeals level culminated with a reversal in September. This effectively ended hope that the courts would declare the policy unconstitutional, and

threw the issue back into the political arena.

The **Supreme Court** favorably decided cases of importance to gays and lesbians. In the *Oncale* decision it ruled that sexual harassment can be same-sex. The *Brigdon* decision declared that the Americans with Disabilities Act covers people who are HIV-positive but do not yet have an AIDS-defining condition.

Protease inhibitors in combination therapy lost a bit of their luster as the side effect of **lipodystrophy** emerged as a significant problem. The syndrome includes wasting from extremities and deposits of fat around the stomach, breasts, and in "buffalo humps" between the shoulders.

Sustiva and Ziagen were approved as new antiviral therapies, while Panretin for KS skin lesions and Fomivirsen for CMV retinitis joined the arsenal against opportunistic infections. All are welcome options that offer incremental improvements but no breakthroughs in treatment.

The **World AIDS Conference** in Geneva, in July, documented transmission of HIV that is resistant to most therapies, including protease inhibitors. That fact reinforced the message that prevention is the most important tool we

have to fight this disease. It damned Bill Clinton for his refusal to fund needle exchange programs that reduce transmission of HIV.

AIDS still kills. The death toll this year included the president's nemesis, **Steve Michael of ACT UP/Washington**, who died in May.

Congress was relatively benign to gay interests during 1998. It continued what has become a tradition of appropriating more money for AIDS research and care than the president requested. Anti-gay amendments were proposed in the House and some even passed that body, but none survived the full congressional process to face a presidential veto or signature.

A landmark event occurred in August when the **Hefley amendment** was crushed 252 to 176. It would have rolled back President Clinton's executive order standardizing protection for gays and lesbians in the federal workplace. It was the first time that the community was able to defeat an anti-gay amendment of the homophobic right in an outright vote on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. The floor debate was especially striking because a number of conservative Republicans spoke out in opposition to the amendment. Tom Bliley (R-Virginia), the powerful chairman of the Com-

merce Committee, said, "If a person does an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, that's all I can ask."



James Hormel

In the Senate, **James Hormel's** nomination as ambassador to Luxembourg was in limbo as a handful of arch-conservatives placed a "hold" on it. Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Mississippi) did not allow the archaic rule to be waived. Meanwhile, the openly gay **Fred Hochberg** was confirmed with little fanfare as number two at the Small Business Administration.

November brought a parcel of pleasant surprises. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin) became the first open **lesbian elected to Congress**, while other gay and lesbian candidates ran winning or credible campaigns across the country. Coupled with that, candidates most closely associated with the religious right were the ones most likely to go down to defeat. That was most apparent in the South, the supposed stronghold of the theocrats.

Newt Gingrich stepped down as **Speaker of the House** in November when Republicans lost a handful of seats. His successor, Robert Livingston of Louisiana, did not even officially become speaker before resigning December 19, and the party's Washington leadership appears in disarray as the year ends.

Hopes for **gay marriage** in Hawaii faded as the state Supreme Court hesitated to deliver its verdict. That allowed reactionaries to organize a ballot measure which gave the Legislature authority to define the possibility of gay marriage out of existence. Alaska offered a brief glimmer of hope on the marriage front but that was also dashed at the polls. Only Vermont still looks encouraging.

A cadre of **religious right** organizations mounted a campaign to tell the "truth" about homosexuality, that Jesus could set them straight. The ads in newspapers, later supplemented with television commercials, generated much publicity for their position. But the controversy also offered a great opportunity for the lesbian and gay community to tell their side of the story. Some observers feel that the right's effort probably worked among their hard core supporters, who write checks, but was counter-productive among undecided Americans.

The cherry on this sundae was the Georgia Supreme Court ruling that the state's **sodomy** law violated individual rights to privacy and therefore was unconstitutional. It was especially sweet because that law was the basis for the notorious 1986 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Bowers v. Hardwick*, which has been used to justify second-class treatment of lesbian and gay Americans. ▼

Propecia™ (Finasteride) Tablets

PROPECIA™ is for use by MEN ONLY.

Please read this leaflet before you start taking PROPECIA. Also, read the information included with PROPECIA each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss PROPECIA when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups.

What is PROPECIA used for?

PROPECIA is used for the treatment of male pattern hair loss on the vertex and the anterior mid-scalp area.

PROPECIA is for use by **MEN ONLY** and should **NOT** be used by women or children.

What is male pattern hair loss?

Male pattern hair loss is a common condition in which men experience thinning of the hair on the scalp. Often, this results in a receding hairline and/or balding on the top of the head. These changes typically begin gradually in men in their 20s. Doctors believe male pattern hair loss is due to heredity and is dependent on hormonal effects. Doctors refer to this type of hair loss as androgenetic alopecia.

Results of clinical studies:

For 12 months, doctors studied over 1800 men aged 18 to 41 with mild to moderate amounts of ongoing hair loss. All men, whether receiving PROPECIA or placebo (a pill containing no medication) were given a medicated shampoo (Neutrogena T/Gel™ Shampoo). Of these men, approximately 1200 with hair loss at the top of the head were studied for an additional 12 months. In general, men who took PROPECIA maintained or increased the number of visible scalp hairs and noticed improvement in their hair in the first year, with the effect maintained in the second year. Hair counts in men who did not take PROPECIA continued to decrease.

In one study, patients were questioned on the growth of body hair. PROPECIA did not appear to affect hair in places other than the scalp.

Will PROPECIA work for me?

For most men, PROPECIA increases the number of scalp hairs, helping to fill in thin or balding areas of the scalp. Men taking PROPECIA noted a slowing of hair loss during two years of use. Although results will vary, generally you will not be able to grow back all of the hair you have lost. There is not sufficient evidence that PROPECIA works in the treatment of receding hairline in the temporal area on both sides of the head.

Male pattern hair loss occurs gradually over time. On average, healthy hair grows only about half an inch each month. Therefore, it will take time to see any effect.

You may need to take PROPECIA daily for three months or more before you see a benefit from taking PROPECIA. PROPECIA can only work over the long term if you continue taking it. If the drug has not worked for you in twelve months, further treatment is unlikely to be of benefit. If you stop taking PROPECIA, you will likely lose the hair you have gained within 12 months of stopping treatment. You should discuss this with your doctor.

How should I take PROPECIA?

Follow your doctor's instructions.

- Take one tablet by mouth each day.
- You may take PROPECIA with or without food.
- If you forget to take PROPECIA, do not take an extra tablet. Just take the next tablet as usual.

PROPECIA will **not** work faster or better if you take it more than once a day.

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Issued December 1997
9090801

982306/3(801)-PRP

Patient Information about PROPECIA®

(Pro-pee-sha)

Generic name: finasteride
(fin-AS-tur-eyed)

Who should NOT take PROPECIA?

- PROPECIA is for the treatment of male pattern hair loss in **MEN ONLY** and should not be taken by women or children.
- Anyone allergic to any of the ingredients.

A warning about PROPECIA and pregnancy.

- Women who are or may potentially be pregnant:
 - must not use PROPECIA
 - should not handle crushed or broken tablets of PROPECIA.
- If a woman who is pregnant with a male baby absorbs the active ingredient in PROPECIA, either by swallowing or through the skin, it may cause abnormalities of a male baby's sex organs. If a woman who is pregnant comes into contact with the active ingredient in PROPECIA, a doctor should be consulted. PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling, provided that the tablets are not broken or crushed.

What are the possible side effects of PROPECIA?

Like all prescription products, PROPECIA may cause side effects. In clinical studies, side effects from PROPECIA were uncommon and did not affect most men. A small number of men experienced certain sexual side effects. These men reported one or more of the following: less desire for sex; difficulty in achieving an erection; and a decrease in the amount of semen. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 2% of men. These side effects went away in men who stopped taking PROPECIA. They also disappeared in most men who continued taking PROPECIA.

The active ingredient in PROPECIA is also used by older men at a five-times higher dose to treat enlargement of the prostate. Some of these men reported side effects, including problems with ejaculation, breast swelling and/or tenderness and allergic reactions such as lip swelling and rash. In clinical studies with PROPECIA, these side effects occurred as often in men taking placebo as in those taking PROPECIA.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual effects.

- PROPECIA can affect a blood test called PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen) for the screening of prostate cancer. If you have a PSA test done, you should tell your doctor that you are taking PROPECIA.

Storage and handling.

Keep PROPECIA in the original container and keep the container closed. Store it in a dry place at room temperature. PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling, provided that the tablets are not broken or crushed.

Do not give your PROPECIA tablets to anyone else. It has been prescribed only for you. Keep PROPECIA and all medications out of the reach of children.

THIS LEAFLET PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ABOUT PROPECIA. IF AFTER READING THIS LEAFLET YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ARE NOT SURE ABOUT ANYTHING, ASK YOUR DOCTOR.

1-800-830-7375, Monday through Friday, 8:30 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M. (ET).

Propecia™ (Finasteride) Tablets

If you're HIV+, CRIXIVAN may help you live a longer, healthier life.



■ New NIH research showed people taking CRIXIVAN in triple therapy lived longer and experienced fewer opportunistic infections.

■ Recent year-long research conducted by the National Institutes of Health (Protocol ACTG 320) studied over 1,000 patients and confirmed results from another study.

■ The group of patients receiving CRIXIVAN along with 3TC and AZT achieved a reduction in deaths and AIDS-defining illnesses over those taking 3TC and AZT alone. This reduction was significant enough for the NIH to recommend the study be stopped, so that all participants could benefit from the findings. Because the study was ended early, there was insufficient data to determine the statistical impact of CRIXIVAN on survival.

■ CRIXIVAN in triple therapy continues to hold serum viral load down below the limit of detection at the one year mark.

■ In a separate, ongoing landmark study, over 90% of the 31 patients receiving CRIXIVAN, AZT, and 3TC reduced their HIV serum viral load below the limit of detection after 24 weeks (as measured by available tests; the virus may still be present in other organ systems).

■ Importantly, the limited number of patients who chose to stay with the study for longer periods of time maintained these results through the one year mark.

■ CRIXIVAN is generally well tolerated.

■ CRIXIVAN can be taken with a light meal or on an empty stomach. There are side effects associated with protease inhibitors in general and CRIXIVAN in particular. Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN may develop kidney stones. For some, this can lead to more severe kidney problems including kidney failure. Drinking at least 6 glasses of water each day may help reduce the chance of forming a kidney stone. Other side effects reported include rapid breakdown of red blood cells and liver problems. There are some common medications and AIDS-related medications you should not take with CRIXIVAN. Discuss all medications you are taking or plan to take with your doctor.

■ As with other protease inhibitors, increased bleeding in some patients with hemophilia and increased blood sugar levels or diabetes have been reported. Please read the following page for detailed information on side effects and dosing.

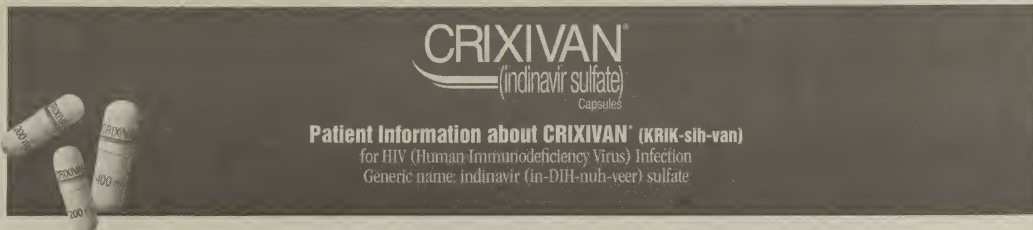
Please read the following page for more detailed information about CRIXIVAN.

**Remember to
ask your doctor
about CRIXIVAN.**

CRIXIVAN[®]
(indinavir sulfate)
Capsules

Going the distance.

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce the chance of illnesses and death associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 T-cell count. Some patients may not experience these effects. CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS.



Please read this information before you start taking CRIXIVAN. Also, you should read the information included with CRIXIVAN each time you receive your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this information does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss CRIXIVAN when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when using CRIXIVAN and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

What is CRIXIVAN?

CRIXIVAN is an oral capsule used for the treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). CRIXIVAN is a type of HIV drug called a protease (PRO-tee-ase) inhibitor.

How does CRIXIVAN work?

CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN can also help lower the amount of HIV in your body (called "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

CRIXIVAN is usually prescribed with other anti-HIV drugs such as ZDV (also called AZT), 3TC, ddI, ddC, or d4T. CRIXIVAN works differently from these other anti-HIV drugs. Talk with your doctor about how you should take CRIXIVAN.

CRIXIVAN has been studied in adults. The safety and effectiveness of CRIXIVAN in children and adolescents have not been established.

How should I take CRIXIVAN?

There are six important things you must do to help you benefit from CRIXIVAN:

1. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every day as prescribed by your doctor.** Continue taking CRIXIVAN unless your doctor tells you to stop. Take the exact amount of CRIXIVAN that your doctor tells you to take, right from the very start. To help make sure you will benefit from CRIXIVAN, you must not skip doses or take "drug holidays." If you don't take CRIXIVAN as prescribed, the activity of CRIXIVAN may be reduced (due to resistance).
2. **Take CRIXIVAN capsules every 8 hours around the clock, every day.** It may be easier to remember to take CRIXIVAN if you take it at the same time every day. If you have questions about when to take CRIXIVAN, your doctor or health care provider can help you decide what schedule works for you.
3. **If you miss a dose by more than 2 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regularly scheduled time.** However, if you miss a dose by less than 2 hours, take your missed dose immediately. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of CRIXIVAN at any one time.
4. **Take CRIXIVAN with water.** You can also take CRIXIVAN with other beverages such as skim or non-fat milk, juice, coffee, or tea.
5. **Ideally, take each dose of CRIXIVAN without food but with water at least one hour before or two hours after a meal.** Or you can take CRIXIVAN with a light meal. Examples of light meals include:
 - dry toast with jelly, juice, and coffee (with skim or non-fat milk and sugar if you want)
 - corn flakes with skim or non-fat milk and sugar

Do not take CRIXIVAN at the same time as any meals that are high in calories, fat, and protein (for example — a bacon and egg breakfast). When taken at the same time as CRIXIVAN, these foods can interfere with CRIXIVAN being absorbed into your bloodstream and may lessen its effect.

6. **It is critical that you drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) throughout the day, every day.** CRIXIVAN can cause kidney stones. Having enough fluids in your body should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Does CRIXIVAN cure HIV or AIDS?

CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CRIXIVAN may still develop infections or other conditions associated with HIV. Because of this, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. Although CRIXIVAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS, CRIXIVAN can help reduce your chances of getting illnesses, including death, associated with HIV. CRIXIVAN may not have these effects in all patients.

Does CRIXIVAN reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

CRIXIVAN has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination.

Who should not take CRIXIVAN?

Do not take CRIXIVAN if you have had a serious allergic reaction to CRIXIVAN or any of its components.

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor?

Talk to your doctor if:

- You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while you are taking CRIXIVAN. We do not yet know how CRIXIVAN affects pregnant women or their developing babies.
- You are breast-feeding. You should stop breast-feeding if you are taking CRIXIVAN. Also talk to your doctor if you have:
- Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease caused by cirrhosis.
- Problems with your kidneys.
- Diabetes
- Hemophilia

Tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking or plan to take, including non-prescription medicines.

Can CRIXIVAN be taken with other medications?*

Drugs you should not take with CRIXIVAN:

SELDANE® (terfenadine) HISMALAN® (astemizole)
 VERSED® (midazolam) HALCION® (triazolam)
 PROPULSID® (cisapride) Ergot medications (e.g., Wigraine® and Cafergot®)
 Taking CRIXIVAN with the above medications could result in serious or life-threatening problems (such as irregular heartbeat or excessive sleepiness).
 In addition, you should not take CRIXIVAN with rifampin, known as RIFADIN®, RIFAMATE®, RIFATER®, or RIMACTANE®.

Drugs you can take with CRIXIVAN include:

RETROVIR® (zidovudine, ZDV also called AZT) BIAVIN® (clarithromycin)
 TAGAMET® (cimetidine) isoniazid (INH)
 DIFLUCAN® (fluconazole) ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35® (oral contraceptive)
 ZERIT® (stavudine, d4T)

EPIVIR™ (lamivudine, 3TC)

BACTRIM®/SEPTA® (trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole)

VIDEX® (didanosine, ddI) — If you take CRIXIVAN with VIDEX®, take them at least one hour apart.

MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin) — If you take CRIXIVAN with MYCOBUTIN®, your doctor may adjust both the dose of MYCOBUTIN and the dose of CRIXIVAN.

NIZORAL® (ketoconazole) — If you take CRIXIVAN with NIZORAL®, your doctor may adjust the dose of CRIXIVAN.

Talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking.

What are the possible side effects of CRIXIVAN?

Like all prescription drugs, CRIXIVAN can cause side effects. The following is not a complete list of side effects reported with CRIXIVAN when taken either alone or with other anti-HIV drugs. Do not rely on this page alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN developed kidney stones. In some of these patients this led to more severe kidney problems, including kidney failure or inflammation of the kidneys. Drinking at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquid (preferably water) each day should help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had rapid breakdown of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia) which in some cases was severe or resulted in death.

Some patients treated with CRIXIVAN have had liver problems including liver failure and death. Some patients had other illnesses or were taking other drugs. It is uncertain if CRIXIVAN caused these liver problems.

Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) have occurred in patients taking protease inhibitors. In some of these patients, this led to ketoacidosis, a serious condition caused by poorly controlled blood sugar. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients required adjustments to their diabetes medication. Others needed new diabetes medication.

In some patients with hemophilia, increased bleeding has been reported.

Clinical Studies

Increases in bilirubin (one laboratory test of liver function) have been reported in approximately 10% of patients. Usually, this finding has not been associated with liver problems. However, on rare occasions, a person may develop yellowing of the skin and/or eyes.

Side effects occurring in 2% or more of patients included: abdominal pain, fatigue or weakness, flank pain, feeling unwell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, acid regurgitation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, back pain, headache, trouble sleeping, dizziness, taste changes, rash, upper respiratory infection, dry skin, and sore throat.

Swollen kidneys due to blocked urine flow occurred rarely.

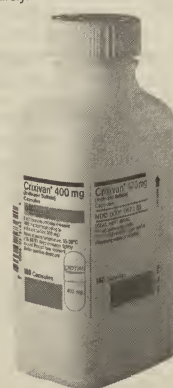
Marketing Experience

Other side effects reported since CRIXIVAN has been marketed include: abdominal swelling; inflammation of the kidneys; increased fat appearing in areas such as the neck, abdomen, and back; change in skin color; severe skin reactions; hair loss; crystals in the urine; and allergic reactions.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms. If the condition persists or worsens, seek medical attention.

How should I store CRIXIVAN capsules?

- Keep CRIXIVAN capsules in the bottle they came in and at room temperature (59°F-86°F).
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This provides a summary of information about CRIXIVAN. If you have any questions or concerns about either CRIXIVAN or HIV, talk to your doctor.

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1998 IN REVIEW

1998 in review

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Gay Latino **Jose Cisneros** was named to the city's Parking and Traffic Commission, replacing outspoken lesbian commissioner Sharon Bretz, whom the mayor unceremoniously fired in December 1997.

Latina lesbian **Susan Leal** was sworn into office as the city's treasurer January 8 before a packed audience at City Hall.

Alameda school teacher **Victoria Forrester**, who was cleared of charges filed by an irate parent after her class held a student-initiated discussion of the coming out episode of *Ellen* in May 1997, was honored at a community dinner in the East Bay city January 15. More than 300 people from a variety of faiths, races, and sexual orientations attended.

The Reverend **Penny Nixon** was made the first woman full pastor for the 450 member Metropolitan Community Church-San Francisco (MCC-SF) on January 25.

Municipal Judge **Kay Tsenin** dismissed or diverted a variety of misdemeanor charges against four members of ACT UP/San Francisco January 12. The charges stemmed from the infamous incident in which ACT UP/SF members showered cat litter on San Francisco AIDS Foundation Executive Director **Pat Christen**, and another incident at Davies Medical Center. Prosecutors were not pleased.

The **AIDS Emergency Fund** (AEF) announced cuts to clients in several outlying counties because data showed the counties—Sonoma, Napa, Contra Costa, Solano, and Santa Cruz—provided virtually no income to AEF. The decision followed a community meeting where there was a strong feeling to keep the money in the counties where the money was coming from.

The **National Task Force on AIDS Prevention** (NTFAP) announced top administrators would take a pay cut in January, as the agency struggled to keep afloat after a long history of fiscal troubles.

A 12-year-old heterosexual, **Steven Cozza** of Petaluma, started his "Scouting For All" campaign to get the Boy Scouts of America to change its anti-gay policy. "If you're gay, that's the way you're born. Just be who you are," Cozza said.

Some 200 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth from all over California descended on Sacramento January 21 for a **Youth Lobby Day**, where kids watched government in action and challenged legislators.



Russian River residents coped with flooding in February.

February

On February 7, El Nino rains and rock slides flooded **Russian River** residents, particularly in the town of **Rio Nido**.

Prompted by a complaint filed by the *Bay Area Reporter* with City Attorney Louise Renne, and after two months of legal research and discussion, the city's **HIV Prevention Planning Council** voted 12 to 6 to follow the state's Ralph M. Brown Act for open government procedures.

Corporate headhunter **Eunice Azzani**'s confidential memo to several board members of the **San Francisco AIDS Foundation** (SFAF) was leaked to ACT UP/San Francisco in early February. The document revealed compensation for top administrators, like SFAF Executive Director **Pat Christen** is on the rise; and pointed to a new trend of giving nonprofit executives one-time bonuses. The memo made it appear Christen's six-figure salary of \$148,794 for fiscal year 1996 was in line or less than salaries for other nonprofit executive directors. Critics of SFAF said the information showed that misplaced financial priorities are symptoms of a larger problem at the \$17 million AIDS service organization (ASO).

SFAF slightly loosened requirements for people attending the agency's **board meetings**.

Lesbian **Nancy Bento** sued Kraft Foods, Inc., claiming that as her employer, the company discriminated against her because of her sexual orientation, gender, and age. Bento's attorney, former San Francisco Supervisor **Angela Alioto**, stated in the complaint filed February 4 that Bento was subjected to "continual and wrongful" harassment, including finding her car tires slashed and the word "DYKE" in a circle with a horizontal line through it, scrawled on her car door.

Castro merchants said they're fed up with "**professional panhandlers**," at a February 19 meeting with city officials to discuss the issue of homeless people and panhandlers in the Castro. Merchants of Upper Market and Castro (MUMC) drafted a controversial flyer that urged people to donate to community groups rather than give money to people on the street.

About 1,500 school district staff received diversity training in February; the workshops were spearheaded in part by **Dr. Juanita Owens**, a lesbian who serves on the San Francisco Board of Education.

Trial started in San Francisco Superior Court in mid-February in the infamous **pit-bull** case. Defendants Justo Rivera, Eltro Nelson, and Randolph Rodrigues were charged with instigating a December 15, 1996 attack that left

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1998 in review

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two gay men, **Thomas Mason** and **John Paul Koolas**, with serious injuries, including severe dog-bite wounds. Koolas apparently went into hiding and did not testify, making the prosecution's case of anti-gay prejudice all the more difficult to prove to the jury.

March

March was a month highlighted by acts of **violence against gays and lesbians**. On March 3, Community United Against Violence (CUAV) and the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) released a report showing violence committed against queers 23 years of age and older declined slightly in San Francisco, while acts against the younger, school-age set stepped up a bit.

The following day, jurors failed to reach a verdict in the **pit-bull** case, and a mistrial was declared.

On March 12, gay city resident **Brian Wilmes**, 45, was fatally punched by suspect **Edgard Mora**, 26, outside of the Loading Dock bar on Mission Street. Wilmes died two days later. Mora was taken into custody and charged with murder and a hate crime enhancement because he allegedly shouted variations of, "Do you want a piece of me?" before he struck Wilmes.

In the aftermath of the attack, CUAV admitted it does "way too little" in terms of having a widespread **whistle campaign** in place. While it's doubtful a whistle would have prevented Wilmes's death, CUAV was criticized by activists who complained CUAV didn't keep a whistle campaign

started by the Butterfly Brigade in the late 1970s.

Wilmes's murder prompted a March 21 community forum, where law enforcement officials, representatives from CUAV, and political leaders encouraged residents to know their rights, know how to report a crime, and get self-defense classes. Whistles were distributed.

In another incident of anti-gay violence, city resident **Scott Walton** reported he was the victim of **gay-bashing aboard a Muni Metro train** March 4. Walton and others were taunted and subjected to a barrage of verbal assaults from three young men who loudly derided passengers as "faggots." Walton gave CUAV high marks for helping him report his ordeal.

MUMC and MCC-SF disagreed over what to do about the homeless and panhandlers in the **Castro** at a March 5 meeting. Merchants almost unanimously favored spending \$1,000 on a campaign to discourage donations to street people. The Reverend **Jim Mitulski** of MCC-SF, opposed the move, saying the materials have a "very dehumanizing tone." The church, along with volunteers from A Different Light bookstore, serve meals to the homeless several days a week. Mitulski took issue with MUMC's charges that the quality of life in the Castro has declined because of the panhandlers.

The **Accountability on Non-profits Task Force** reached consensus on four areas related to opening up agencies that receive city funding. On March 9, Supervisor Tom Ammiano commended task force members and called for a hearing on the issue.

For the first time since its in-



A small building next to the Fallon Building was demolished in March to make way for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center.

ception 24 years ago, the **Cable Car Awards** ceremony, honoring achievements by leaders of the city's LGBT community, did not take place. The March 28 event was put on hold due to illnesses in the families of its co-chairs, Carlos Larranaga and Hydrie Dornard.

A transgender woman, **Christiana Rivas**, threatened to sue the city after she was disqualified from employment as a San Francisco police officer on the basis of the police department's psychological exam. Rivas said she breezed through the department's written, oral, lie-detector, and physical exams, as well as a thorough background check.

It was also a lovefest among preservationists and board members of the **LGBT Community Center Project** as the board unanimously voted to rescind its September 1997 decision to de-

molish the 104-year-old Fallon Building on March 18. Preservationists pledged to help raise money for the \$10.7 million project that includes renovating the Queen Anne Victorian and constructing a new building next door.

On March 31, Mayor Brown named openly gay businessman **Mark Leno** as the city's newest supervisor, filling the seat vacated by Leal.

April

The defendants in the **pit-bull** trial were not re-tried on hate crime charges and walked free, after the district attorney's office agreed to a plea bargain in which the three defendants pled guilty to only a single misdemeanor charge each.

ACT UP/Golden Gate zapped San Francisco Supervisor **Mabel Teng** at the board's Finance Committee meeting April 1. The activists called on Teng to sched-

ule a hearing on Ammiano's sunshine for nonprofits legislation, which she did on April 22.

Paul Causey abruptly quit his job as executive director at AIDS Benefits Counselors (ABC); rumors he was fired were denied on April 3. Causey was credited with overseeing the successful merger of ABC with Positive Resources.

NTFAP quit its local HIV/AIDS programs on April 3 after the agency failed to get a last minute bail out from the city. With a deficit of \$500,000, NTFAP decided to end its contracts with the local programs. Black Coalition on AIDS took over New Village, while Mobilization Against AIDS started running Proyecto Contra SIDA Por Vida.

On April 10, U.S. District Court Judge Claudia Wilken issued her ruling regarding the city's **equal benefits ordinance**. Wilken upheld the bulk of the city's law and ruled that in most cases, the city can require contractors to offer domestic partner benefits to employees. With respect to the airlines, however, Wilken ruled that because of federal regulations, air carriers do not have to offer some benefits such as health and pension benefits. "This is one small step for San Francisco and one giant leap for human rights," said deputy City Attorney Dennis Aftergut, who serves as lead counsel on the case.

Famed restaurateur **Jeremiah Tower** withdrew from SFAF's awards dinner, where he was to be recognized with the organization's community service award. Tower's decision April 14 came one day after the B.A.R. called the foundation to inquire why it was bestowing the award on Tower, a

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(1) AMERICAN JOURNAL OF OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY, 1996; (2) INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FERTILITY, 1996; (3) CALIFORNIA LAVENDER SMOKEFREE PROJECT, CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION.

1998 IN REVIEW

Bay Area chef who was found guilty in 1993 of discriminating against an employee with AIDS at his trendy restaurant Stars.

The **Pride Committee** announced that it had repaid two-thirds of its \$170,000 debt from the 1997 pride event.

A series of **assaults against lesbians** in Sonoma County prompted many to take action. In mid-April, several dozen people formed an action group and plastered the county with a police sketch of the male suspect. At least five assaults against lesbians were reported in February and March.

The Stop AIDS Project celebrated giving out **500,000 condoms** through its distribution program in bars and clubs. The Condoms Now! program took a year to get started after continued pushing by community activists, but has been hailed a success in helping prevent HIV.

Local public broadcasting company **KQED** denied a former employee with AIDS the money an arbitrator ruled it should pay because of its discriminatory actions toward the former senior accountant, **Scott Flesher**. After KQED denied wrongdoing, the case headed for trial.

Hollywood invaded the Castro April 16 when motion picture director **Ron Howard** filmed part of his new comedy in front of the famous Castro Theatre. MUMC was successful in negotiating \$2,500 from Universal Pictures that went into the Castro beautification fund.

Dennis Peron turned the keys to his Cannabis Cultivators Center over to Hazel Rodgers, 78, who promptly opened the Cannabis Healing Center in the famed building on Market Street.

SFAF launched its "Gay Life" program, run by heterosexual **Rene Durazzo**.

Gay political consultant **Scott Shafer** left his job in politics on April 13 to become the host of KQED's *The California Report*, a weekly program broadcast on more than 20 radio stations throughout the state.

In late April, gay activist **Brian Cheu** left the Human Rights Commission to take over as executive director for the Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center (LYRIC).

Mark Leno was sworn in as a supervisor on April 22.

A Contra Costa County Superior Court jury on April 29 found **Gary Parkison**, an East Bay gay former doctor, guilty of two felony counts of soliciting the murder-for-hire of his onetime lover.

PWA **Daniel V. Jones** of Southern California set his truck and himself on fire April 30 after



Director Ron Howard (right) and actor Matthew McConaughey on Castro Street last April.

blocking two Los Angeles freeways, then shot himself to death in front of millions of television viewers to bring attention to problems he faced and the healthcare he received at his HMO.

Viagra hit the market.

May

The **Lobby for Individual Freedom and Equality (LIFE)** shut its doors May 1.

Contractual restrictions prevent pop star **Boy George** from performing at San Francisco's gay pride celebration, Pride Committee Executive Director Teddy Witherington announced. Witherington had previously said Boy George would be performing at the event.

The **Boy Scouts of America's** national anti-gay policy hurt local affiliations where it counts — in the wallet. On May 5 the Berkeley City Council voted 8 to 1 to stop giving the Sea Scouts a free ride by not charging them for two berths at the Berkeley Marina. In San Francisco, Supervisor **Teng** was instrumental in getting a local charity to drop four California Boy Scout councils from its list of recipients of a city employees' annual charity drive.

Authorities in Mendocino County made an arrest May 6 in connection with the murder of a gay man found beaten to death near Ukiah. **Lewis Pearson**, 44, of Aptos, California, had apparently been participating in a weekend gathering of the Billy Club, a group of gay men who enjoy rural lifestyles, shortly before his body was found near a popular cruising spot in Mendocino County. Arrested was Rick Fernandez, 24, who was charged with murder.

Former KOFY-TV station owner **Jim Gabbert** agreed to an out-of-court settlement with a former station employee who sued over alleged sexual harassment. The undisclosed cash set-

tlement, reached between Gabbert and **Roger Mele**, a former KOFY traffic coordinator, abruptly ended a trial in San Francisco Superior Court.

ABC hired **Bob Emerson**, its former board president, as interim executive director. Meanwhile, Paul Causey, who quit running ABC in April, was hired as executive director of the Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center in May.

SFAF released its latest federal tax forms in mid-May and to no one's surprise, Executive Director **Pat Christen** got a raise of 10.5 percent. Her salary went from \$148,794 to \$164,494 for 1996-97. The giant ASO also moved its offices from United Nations Plaza to Market and Sixth streets.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) raided Dennis Peron's remote Lake County **pot farm**. The move came just after a federal judge ruled in favor of a Justice Department civil suit

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1998 in review

◀ previous page

seeking the closure of six cannabis clubs in California. Peron and his many volunteers quickly replanted the farm. Peron, running as a Republican candidate for governor, was left out of the May 13 candidates debate, but remained optimistic about the June primary election.

On May 25, Memorial Day, the Cannabis Healing Center was shut down for good. San Francisco Sheriff Michael Hennessey and his deputies reluctantly raided the establishment at 6 a.m. and permanently closed what had once been a happy place for peaceful pot-smoking patients.

Thanks to the activism of city resident Michael Petrelis, the conservative Family Research

Council jumped on the bandwagon of fighting the high salaries paid to executive directors of ASOs. While Petrelis said he was "uncomfortable" with this latest intrusion by the religious right into the AIDS community, he nonetheless defended his actions.

The fight between landlords and tenants heated up in the weeks before the June election, splitting the city's lesbian and gay community.

The National Center for Lesbian Rights celebrated its 21st anniversary with a big "Liberty Weekend" bash in San Francisco.

The second annual Femme Gender Conference took place May 29-31 with numerous workshops and small panel presentations as well as entertainment and a celebration of all that is femme. California AIDS Ride 5 Pre-



Dennis Peron (with cane) overseeing pot cultivation in Lake County last May

sented by Tanqueray rolled out of San Francisco en route to Los Angeles on May 31. The event was maxed out with 2,500 riders.

June

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors approved compromise legislation regarding bringing sunshine to nonprofit groups that have city contracts. Under the law, nonprofit groups that receive a minimum of \$250,000 in city-administered public funds are required to open up board meetings and disclose some financial information.

Archbishop William Levada urged the mayor to veto the sunshine law; Brown signed it into law June 19.

Dennis Peron did not win the Republican primary for governor.

Kevin Dowling became the first openly gay member of the Hayward City Council following his victory in the June 2 election.

The city celebrated the one-year anniversary of the equal benefits ordinance, despite the unwelcome presence of the Rev-

erend Fred Phelps from Kansas, who came out to protest with his "God Hates Fags" picket signs. Inside City Hall, politicians, activists, and members of the business community celebrated the landmark law.

The Castro homeless versus panhandlers issue heated up again. Protesters shouting "stop the war on the poor" picketed in front of Hot Cookie on Castro Street, denouncing owner Dan Glazer for coming up with the controversial "Create Change, Don't Hand It Out" flyers.

Meanwhile, an infusion of city funds expanded MCC-SF's Simply Supper program and the city pledged to hire an outreach worker to help respond to the Castro's homeless and panhandler problems.

Oakland's L.J. Irving became the first open transgender person on the board of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Irving was a founding member of Lesbians and Gays of African Descent for Democratic Action.

The Salvation Army dropped its \$3.5 million in social service contracts with the city, rather than comply with the equal benefits ordinance.

Former XY magazine coverboy Joshua Puckett's murder trial started in mid-June. Puckett was charged with murder in the death of Vitaly "Steve" Poliakov, who was gay. Puckett, 18, says he's

heterosexual and killed Poliakov to fend off a sexual assault at a home in Orinda in Contra Costa County. The B.A.R. learned that prosecutors have evidence that may help them prove Poliakov and Puckett likely had an intimate relationship before the killing, and the prosecution's star witness, "David," told the B.A.R. he had sex with Puckett once. A defense witness, Michael Stephan, related an incident two years ago in which he said Poliakov had tried to sexually assault him and a friend. The defense charged that the prosecutor in the Puckett case, Assistant District Attorney Barry Grove, tried to intimidate Stephan into changing his story. Puckett's father called his son a "monster" and "sociopath." The trial opened with the defense blaming the victim.

The Castro was livened up with a splash of public art just in time for gay pride festivities, with a mural honoring the late supervisor, Harvey Milk. Artist Josef Norris's design was selected and the mural went up above Milk's former camera shop, and now the Skin Zone, on Castro near 19th Street.

A gay man living with AIDS, Gregory Gill, was served with eviction papers following the failure of Proposition E in the June election and a judge's overturning of the city's owner move-in moratorium. Gill has lived in his Castro apartment for 21 years.

Another milestone took place in the queer Asian community as over 200 delegates from all over the world, including Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia, gathered to attend the first U.S. Chinese Tongzhi Conference at the University of California, San Francisco.

Over the objection of a citizens committee, the Eureka Valley Recreation Center received just a fraction of the money needed for renovation; the rest went to King Pool in the Bayview.

Supervisor Mark Leno proposed a shelter for gay victims of domestic violence.

San Francisco's 28th Gay Pride 1998 arrived in all its splendor June 27-28 and the city came alive with LGBT pride, including plenty of dancing in the streets and packed bars. ▼



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TG among 157 homeless deaths in SF this year

by Cynthia Laird

The reported number of homeless deaths in San Francisco this year reached at least 157 - the highest figure ever recorded - according to a report from the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) released Tuesday, December 15.

The Coalition on Homelessness held a memorial service for all homeless people who died last year on Monday, December 21, one of the coldest days on record in San Francisco. The unusual freezing temperatures hit homeless people hardest because shelters are full and there's nowhere for them to go.

This year's record number of reported homeless deaths is up from last year's figure of 104. Over the past eight years, the annual number of homeless deaths averaged 122 per year. While health officials don't know why there were more homeless deaths than in previous years, the report stated that the vast majority were preventable.

The reporting period was from December 1, 1997 to November 30, 1998. One of the homeless people who died this year was transgender, 22 were female, and 134 were male. The average age of those dying was 42.3 years overall, with an average of 38.7 years for females and 42.9 years for males. Heroin overdoses alone or in combination with other drugs was the cause of 62 deaths. Accidents claimed 13 lives and alcohol use 10. Heart disease and suicide accounted for seven each, while severe infection was the cause of four deaths. Ten deaths were attributed to other causes.

Every year since 1987, the number of people dying homeless in the city has been counted, so that each person may not only be remembered but may teach officials where the system failed and what the city must do to prevent others from falling through the cracks. Since homeless deaths were first recorded in 1987, at least 1,273 homeless San Franciscans have died. This number of homeless people dying every year as identified by the medical examiner (ME) has been documented by DPH for just two years, 1997 and 1998.

According to DPH's report, the 157 deaths identified from ME records represent an undercount of homeless deaths. Deaths of homeless people who were not evaluated by the ME and deaths of people whose homelessness contributed to a premature death but were not homeless when they died, could not be counted.

Drug-taking

The report noted that the lack of affordable housing has increas-



At a Civic Center memorial on Dec. 21 the Rev. Glenda Hope (left) ceremonially ignited a list of homeless people who died in the city this year.

ingly become a prodigious barrier for low-income people in the city. Low vacancy rates, escalating rents, and the loss of public housing units have combined to exacerbate the homeless problem. At the same time, without permanent affordable housing, it is exceedingly difficult for homeless people to manage their health issues, such as diabetes, mental health, or addiction. As a response to this growing problem, DPH is hoping to provide housing subsidies and support services to 200 homeless people this year, according to the report.

One of the descriptions of a death in the report was that of a 53-year-old man identified as C.A., who was found in the bushes near a McDonald's. He died of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, a treatable heart condition. C.A. had been living in Golden Gate Park during the police sweeps last year, and had his heart medications confiscated along with his winter gear.

While it is estimated that there are between 12,000 and 14,000 homeless people each night in San Francisco, there are only around 2,000 shelter beds. There is speculation that the increase in reported deaths this year could be a result of El Nino; 82 of the deaths occurred during the six-month span of December 1997 through May 1998, the months of heavy rainfall.

Another man, identified as R.B., died at the age of 32 at the Mission Rock Shelter from a heroin overdose. He had cerebral palsy and was deaf. According to shelter residents, he had been trying to ask for help but staff could not understand what he was say-

ing. Shelter residents found him dead, kneeling next to his bed, after breakfast.

"The heroin overdoses have exploded over the past two years, and appear to be steadily climbing," the report stated. "Heroin with high levels of purity continues to be widely available at a cheap price in San Francisco. One form of proven medical treatment, methadone, is almost impossible to obtain. In fact, there are 500 people on waiting lists for methadone treatment alone. The city is moving towards helping to alleviate this problem by having methadone treatment more available."

Homeless deaths, while still concentrated in some of the poorer areas of the city - 94 deaths, or 63 percent, were in the Tenderloin, Inner Mission, and South of Market areas of the city - occurred in 29 different neighborhoods throughout San Francisco. Since last year, the number of homeless deaths doubled in the Tenderloin, from 17 to 36, and South of Market, from 12 to 24.

DPH's homeless programs and the Tom Waddell Health Center developed the Homeless Death Prevention Project, which includes research, advocacy, and direct services through outreach components. These were designed based on a Coalition on Homelessness proposal to decrease the large numbers of preventable deaths that occur each year.

"Outreach to those at risk of death must continue to ensure adequate medical care, and workers must be able to access necessary resources on behalf of the homeless population," the report concluded. ▽

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Performance art

by Jim Provenzano

It is a suicide ballet executed by the rarest of creatures. Refine the act of jumping into water from the highest possible location. Do it perfectly. Do not make waves.

Diving, the only sport to include three openly gay Olympic medalists, was almost excluded from Gay Games V. One of those who made waves, and helped bring diving back to Gay Games, was Tim Ramacciotti.

Ramacciotti began diving in a scenario reminiscent of *A Chorus Line's* song "I Can Do That," when a girl in his neighborhood was taking diving lessons and the 8-year-old boy decided he wanted to

dive in, too.

Over the years, he met other kids and a coach whom he thought was gay. "All the clues were there," Ramacciotti was lucky with his coaches, some of whom trained kids who went on to Olympic fame.

By his third year on the team at the University of Massachusetts, he was self-assured enough to be out to a few friends.

"It felt good that there were other folks around like me."

Empowered after competing in Gay Games II in San Francisco, Ramacciotti returned home.

Divers are judged by their performance and presentation as much as the pure physical skill, so it was appropriate that Ramacciotti came out in a big way.

After discredited shrink and virulent homophobe Paul Cameron made an appearance on his campus, the Italian-American diver had had enough. He spoke out in an editorial in the school paper, outing himself to his entire community.

That day, when he entered the pool, "At first, it was complete silence."

Gradually, fellow divers were more open, talking with him about it all, while non-diving swimmers were more "straight and narrow," said Ramacciotti. "People who are in diving have been doing it since they were young. At least for boys and men, there's a higher percentage who

are gay." Fewer come out as boldly.

"Something about the grace, the aesthetics of the sport, has our number written all over it," he said. "The folks who aren't gay have been around gay people for a long time."

But being somewhat out in NCAA competitions wasn't easy. "Sometimes it was clear that

someone else was gay, but they were even more in the closet because of the sports setting. Other times there was camaraderie and brotherhood" among gay divers.

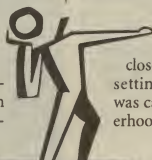
"I couldn't say that there were conscious role models. There weren't, even with other divers who were more in the limelight."

Just before attending Gay Games III in Vancouver, Ramacciotti met then-closeted Greg Louganis in Seattle.

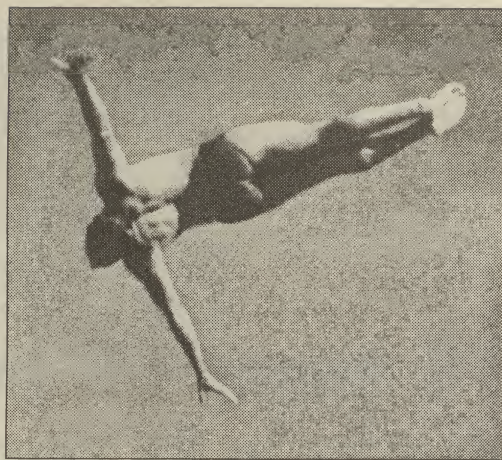
"I asked him to sign a photo. He asked what to write. I said, 'Good luck at the Games,' but he refused, and ended up writing something else. He clearly did not acknowledge it, but he knew about it."

Four years later, Louganis competed at Gay Games IV in New York, after coming out on national television and in time for his successful book tour. By 1997, a Gay Games fundraising letter featuring Louganis was canceled, since his sport had yet to be included.

Ramacciotti calls Seattle home, but is currently in medical school



Sports Complex



Diver Tim Ramacciotti sailed gracefully out of the closet.

at Cleveland's Case Western Reserve, and was one of several athletes who trekked to Amsterdam in 1997 to lobby for the inclusion of diving. He was rebuffed by deposed Executive Director Marc Janssens and Sports Director Jip van Leeuwen, who, he said, cited improper facilities for competitive diving as their reason.

Yet Ramacciotti and others' efforts finally proved fruitful. During their 1997 visits to several U.S. cities, Janssens announced the inclusion of diving as an exhibition sport.

Proceeding under the assumption that at least some form of diving would take place, athletes went ahead and registered in what Ramacciotti called "a crazy process. People registering got their forms sent back saying there was no such thing."

Understandably, many worldwide divers didn't attend, including Ramacciotti, who actually had a different reason — the medical student had to get his tonsils taken out.

Meanwhile, at Gay Games, the last-minute change to open registration led to more participation, but mostly by local straight athletes. Was it a show of sporting spirit, or just extras casting for a mismanaged production? Who can say?

Kilt in action

One diver who did compete, and swept in the medals department, was David Dawson. In six different events, Dawson either medaled or got high scores. Ashamed to say he was the only person in his age group, his three gold and two silvers came a bit too easily.

Yet the informal proceeding provided an inspiration in a more creative way: a synchronized three-meter event yielded 8-10 competitors. "One Australian guy was a dancer in *Cats* on tour. He hadn't dived in years."

Dawson enjoyed the international atmosphere and hung out with the French crew team he'd met while touring Paris before Gay Games V.

Born in Pennsylvania, Dawson grew up in Santa Barbara, but transferred around to get the benefit of the best coaches, including Hobie Billingsley, "one of the best that ever was," said Dawson.

Although he was gay and "played around" in high school and college, Dawson started getting involved in Christian groups, "specifically to avoid dealing with it. Many guys I knew who were gay, were into Christian stuff because they were trying to avoid it."

In college, the "Christian stuff" continued. He studied to become a minister. He also married, and eventually received a doctorate in

linguistics at Edinburgh, Scotland, before coming out.

His wife was supportive as they parted after eight years, and Dawson says his experience helped them both grow "into an appreciation of who we were."

He competed in diving amid all this, and became the Scottish national champion (eligibility is through clubs, not nationality, or how stylish one looks in kilts). A neck injury kept him out for a few years. "The more severe injuries other than hitting platform are hitting the water," he said of his accident.

Out and returning to America, Gay Games IV in 1990 proved to be a major life change for him.

"I was tremendously depressed by there being so many beefed-up gorgeous hunky guys, the sort of perfect GQ model," Dawson said. "Also, competition is very intense the first day." Nevertheless, he excelled and won a silver medal in 1-meter springboard.

He also met a guy and started dating. "To hear so many people yelling, 'You go, girl!' every time I did a dive. It was hysterical! It really broke up the tension."

Naturally, Dawson's hoped for equal success at 1998's Games. But when a petition was circulated protesting the exclusion of diving, Dawson was upset that "one of the most elegant, very popular sports" was canceled.

"A number of people chose not to go just for that reason. They felt it was a slap in the face of the sport, that they really didn't care."

But Dawson said, "If I hadn't been able to compete, I would have done something else. It's part of my responsibility as a gay person to be involved in it."

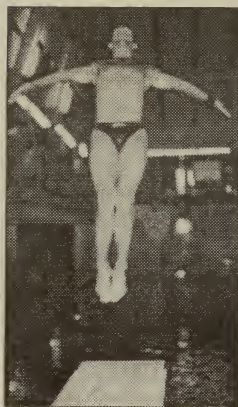
Of Gay Games overall, Ramacciotti said, "There was more accent on whimsy and less on having competitions run as they would be elsewhere. Did Tom Waddell set out to have a big street party every four years? People looking on TV seeing go-go boys will say, 'Oh, another gay pride thing, nothing serious.'"

"There were many people who didn't know what they were doing. The bottom line is these events really are centered on sports and need to be run that way."

By 2002, Sydney should have a wealth of swimming pools to dive into, with platforms to jump from.

But after last week's allegations by the International Olympic Committee's Marc Hodler, who accused the IOC of rampant bribery and corruption, things may change for the Olympics, and consequently, Gay Games. Will we be able to use the post-Olympic facilities, if any?

Who can say? ▼



David Dawson

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for advanced KS lesions

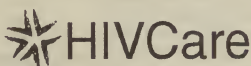
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Fugitive Banana back in Zimbabwe

To face 'justice' or possible pardon by Mugabe

by S. Predrag

The former president of Zimbabwe, Canaan Banana, who sneaked out of the country on the eve of his conviction for sodomy, has unexpectedly returned to the capital city of Harare. The move was sudden and unexpected for many people, but obviously not for the South African president, Nelson Mandela, and his Zimbabwean counterpart, Robert Mugabe.

Well-informed sources say that the 63-year-old fugitive arrived at Beitbridge, the border post between South Africa and Zimbabwe, on the evening of Tuesday, December 15, in a green Mercedes-Benz driven by a South African chauffeur. After reporting in at the border post police station, Banana jumped into a white Mercedes-Benz. Accompanied by the police, he arrived in Harare later that night and showed up at police headquarters. His whereabouts were not known as of the time of this writing, but it was believed that he is under house arrest.

Banana's behavior seems to indicate that he is expecting to be pardoned by his successor, President Mugabe, for a total of 11 sexual assault charges. Local and foreign observers in Harare believe that a deal involving a possible pardon was reached Sunday, December 13, when Mandela held talks with Mugabe. Mandela told journalists that he had reached an

agreement with Mugabe on "a common position" on the issue of Banana, but he evaded all questions, refusing to disclose what it entailed.

Many now believe that Mugabe will pardon the ex-president. Last Thursday, without any explanation, the High Court in Harare postponed Banana's sentencing until January 18. Also, the government-controlled daily, *The Herald*, has urged reporters to stop publicizing "this sad case." The same paper reminded its readers of Comrade Banana's "accomplishments in the years of the Independence struggles."

'French kisses'

The Christian Methodist minister and the father of four grown children was found guilty, among other charges, of two counts of sodomy — one involving his former security aide and soccer player, Jefta Dube, and a job-seeker, Ernest Ngwenya.

The scandal involving the former president (in office from 1980 to 1987) erupted in February 1997, during the trial of his former aide, Dube.

At the time, Dube, a policeman, was sentenced to 10 years in jail for the 1995 murder of a fellow police officer who had tauntingly called him "Banana's wife."

Later, Dube alleged that Banana raped him in the Statehouse. The court heard testimony from witnesses such as Banana's cook, gardener, and others with similar

accusations.

According to several witnesses, Banana lured his victims to the Statehouse always using the same scenario: a game of cards, dance lessons, "French kisses."

Banana unsuccessfully tried to reject all the accusations, saying that there was a "conspiracy against him."

He also appealed to the Harare court, claiming that negative pre-trial publicity in the media had prejudiced his right to a fair hearing.

Mugabe told journalists that he did not mind if gays and lesbians "have come as individuals to pray to enhance their moral entity as human beings, and desist from their gay ways."

Banana escaped from the country just days before Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku convicted him, in absentia, of 11 charges of sodomy, attempted sodomy, and indecent assault.

His passport was lodged with the Registrar of the High Court in Harare, but, according to *The Zimbabwe Standard*, an independent local weekly, the former president crossed the border into Botswana using a pass allegedly issued by the Ministry of Home Af-

fairs in Harare.

Banana, the first Zimbabwean president after former Rhodesia seized independence in April 1980, remained in Botswana, quite possibly in a church, for several days.

His next stop was South Africa, one of the few African countries where homosexuals are not prosecuted.

'Dangerous security'

Foreign analysts in Harare are rather skeptical of the fugitive ex-president's explanations for flee-

ing, which they consider an attempt at reducing the gravity of his run from justice.

"There were plans to eliminate me physically," the ex-president claimed in an interview published Friday, December 18 in Zimbabwe's weekly, *The Financial Gazette*. He added that he had to flee the country because "I was in possession of dangerous security information which I wanted to share with my real friends." Banana did not disclose what kind of infor-

mation he had, but it is believed that he thought his opponents wanted to eliminate him before the 2002 elections, when the present mandate of President Mugabe will expire.

It is widely believed that the scandal shocked and deeply embarrassed Mugabe, a well-known critic of homosexuals, who has been quoted as saying that they were "lower than dogs and pigs." Mugabe, 74, has repeatedly attacked homosexuals, making inflammatory remarks such as "even animals in the jungle are better than these people because at least they know that this is a man or a woman," and saying it is his opinion that God will one day punish homosexuals, whose sexual activities are against Christian beliefs.

Mugabe was sharply rebuked for such comments by many human rights organizations and western leaders.

Mugabe addressed over 4,000 of the World Council of Churches (WCC) earlier this month, during which gay activists and sympathizers, mostly Americans and Germans protested. In his address at the WCC Assembly, Mugabe did not attack gays and lesbians, but appealed to the Western countries to write off Third World debts.

After his address, Mugabe told journalists that he did not mind if gays and lesbians "have come as individuals to pray to enhance their moral entity as human beings, and desist from their gay ways." ▼

Holiday dinners

◀ page 1

Metropolitan Community Church-San Francisco. Volunteers are still needed, and should call Dave at (415) 865-2752.

Tenderloin Tessie will whip up her Christmas Day Dinner for Everyone at the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco, located at 1187 Franklin Street at Geary, from 1 to 4 p.m. The holiday dinners began in the early 1970s through the efforts of the Imperial Court, and are made possible through donations by the wider gay community, the new Gold Room, Castro Lions, Suzy Wong's turkey pluck, the Empress' Council, and the Ducal Council. Anyone interested in making a donation to the dinner or in volunteering at the dinner should call A.L. Allen at (415) 621-1169, or Empress Phyllis at (415) 863-5277.

Dolores Street Community Services (DSCS) is San Francisco's premier provider of emer-

gency food and shelter services to homeless Latinos, and is the only men's shelter serving the Mission and Castro districts. "We are urgently in need," says DSCS Executive Director Bob Nelson, "in need of clean blankets through the cold months. Due to lack of space, we often have to turn homeless people back out into the cold. The least we can do is give them clean blankets and toiletries."

The DSCS Housing Program, serving over 2,000 individuals each year, many of them working poor, provides safe, dignified shelter, food, case management, medical help and classes in English as a second language. "We are always in need of volunteers and donations of food, personal items, and the funds to buy them. But never so much as the winter months," said DSCS Housing Director David Rodriguez. To donate to DSCS please call (415) 282-6209, or send your check to Dolores Street Community Services, DHP, 928 Valencia, San Francisco, 94110. ▼

Blue Nitro

◀ page 13

not," McGlashan asserted.

GHB is currently illegal in nine states including California. Upon completion of the lab tests at the poison control center, law officers would have the authority to classify possession of substances like Blue Nitro an equal felony to that of GHB possession. Tests on Blue Nitro are expected to be completed by the end of the month.

"The current penalty for possession of GHB," according to McGlashan, "is \$1,000 and one year in prison. The likely ruling

on Blue Nitro will be an equal penalty for possession. If the tests report that Blue Nitro is a true analogue of GHB, the penalties for possession will be immediately in effect," he said.

The definition of "analogue" in terms of drug testing means there is a direct correspondence in the ingredients when two substances are compared, therefore the same or very similar biological effects happen when ingestion occurs.

"It's no surprise that the Castro and South of Market received most or all of the samples," McGlashan stated. "Those are already areas of high drug consumption, so they are easy targets." ▼

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Clinton cleans air on clean water standards

by Peter Cassels

AIDS researchers and activists welcomed President Bill Clinton's December 3 announcement that he plans to toughen water quality standards to protect the public against harmful microbes like cryptosporidia. Often found in urban drinking water, the parasites can make people with HIV and others with compromised immune systems seriously ill, sometimes fatally.

Clinton announced his plans to upgrade water treatment plants before a crowd of about 2,000 at Fort Adams State Park in Newport, Rhode Island, with Narragansett Bay and the Newport Bridge as a backdrop.

"Today, the new standards we put in place will significantly reduce the risk from cryptosporidium and other microbes, to ensure that no community ever has to endure an outbreak like the one the people in Milwaukee suffered," the president said. He was referring to an outbreak in that city's water supply in 1993 that killed dozens of people and sickened more than 400,000.

"Second, we are taking steps to

ensure that when we treat our water, we do it as safely as possible," Clinton said. "One of the great health advances of the 20th century is the control of ... diseases with disinfectants. But, as with so many other advances, there are trade-offs. We now see that some of the disinfectants we use to protect our water can actually combine with natural substances to create harmful compounds." He announced new standards to reduce the use of disinfectants.

The federal government will help communities meet the new higher standards by releasing about \$800 million in funds to upgrade water filtration systems, Clinton said.

AIDS researchers and activists welcomed the news. "I think it's a good idea," Dr. Ken Mayer, research director at the Fenway Community Health Center in Boston and director of the Brown University AIDS Program said. "It's not just cryptosporidium that's a problem. There are a variety of waterborne pathogens, so it will be beneficial for people living with HIV. I think it's very worthwhile."

Cryptosporidium is more common in urban water supplies than is generally assumed, Mayer

said. If a person with HIV drinks water containing the parasite, it is sometimes able to attach itself to the lining of the intestinal tract and start multiplying, thereby preventing the absorption of nutrients, which leads to violent diarrhea. "People who have intact immune systems and happen to be in an area where cryptosporidium is multiplying in the wild, they could get sick from it, but if their immune systems are intact, their bodies can clear the infection fairly quickly. If someone's

immune system is compromised, it's more difficult."

Several years ago, this used to be a major problem for people with HIV, Mayer said, but protease inhibitors have reduced the risk substantially.

"These drugs are not just inhibiting the virus," he pointed out. "There is some evidence that people's immune systems improve as well while they are on the medications. However, we do still occasionally see people with cryptosporidiosis [the infection

caused by the parasite]."

In the past, people with HIV could die from the infection, even with treatment, but that is less common today, Mayer said. Antiparasitic drugs used to treat the infection include Paromomycin, Humatin, Azithromycin, and Atovaquone. "More often than not we go through one drug and it may not work or only partially work," he explained. "Sometimes we use combinations of these drugs. Most HIV patients ultimately respond." ▼

Medical pot in D.C. courtroom

by Bob Roehr

The fight to gain access to medical marijuana is playing out in a federal courtroom in Washington, D.C. But the legal arguments at the Friday, December 18 hearing were more about power and the arrogance of Congress than the merits or demerits of the herb.

ACT UP/D.C. members Wayne Turner and the late Steve Michael organized what became Initiative 59, a ballot measure to decriminalize and regulate medical use of marijuana in the District of Columbia.

In October, less than two weeks before the election, Congressman Bob Barr (R-Georgia) proposed an amendment to an appropriations bill, which passed Congress without debate and on a voice vote. It recently became known that Barr was keynote speaker at a meeting of white supremacists, while D.C. is majority black.

The Barr amendment prevented the local board of elections from spending money on the initiative. The ballot was already printed, so the practical effect of the amendment was to prevent counting the citizens' votes on the issue.

In court, Graham Boyd argued for Turner and other plaintiffs, including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The Barr amendment was "viewpoint discrimination ... that gets to the core of First Amendment protection ... of public discourse," he charged. That is unconstitutional.

Congress acted "because of hostility to that opinion" of the organizers of Initiative 59, Boyd contended. And in so doing, it canceled an election, "for which there is literally no precedent" in U.S. law.

D.C. Corporation Counsel John Ferren said that in exercising

its control over the district, Congress cannot act unconstitutionally with regard to its citizens' rights. He saw "no supremacy clause problem" in the fact that Initiative 59 would establish procedures at odds to federal policy on controlled substances. He compared it to similar ballot measures that passed in California and Arizona.

The Clinton administration, in the form of Justice Department attorney David Anderson, defended the Barr amendment. Congress "is the supreme political authority in the District of Columbia," he said. It simply "asserted its superior legislative power."

Congress did not have to wait and follow the prescribed congressional review process for all D.C. legislation, but could at any time take medical marijuana "off the city's legislative table." Anderson said, "It is not an act of censorship, it is an act of legislative policy making."

Ferren countered, "The more difficult the message, the more important it is to listen to the people" and not short-circuit the political process.

Judge Richard W. Roberts took the case under advisement and promised a quick decision. With the intervening holidays, it seems unlikely that he will rule before early next year.

Speaking outside the courthouse, Turner was "outraged that the U.S. Department of Justice is defending the plantation status that the residents of the District of Columbia have. It is outrageous that six weeks after an election, we still don't know the results." He called it "democracy held hostage."

"As someone who watched the person I loved die of AIDS-wasting syndrome, we will fight tooth and nail so that the terminally ill can be comfortable in their last days." ▼

Thank you, Sharna!



Golden Gate Metropolitan Community Church's the Reverend Sharna Sutherin, second from left, was bid a fond farewell by church members and friends last Sunday, December 20. Sutherin, who's moving to New Mexico, was surrounded by daughter Shalyn Kees, left; son Nathan Kees; and her partner Pam Burgess. Due to a captioning error, a photo accompanying an article about Sutherin on page 25 of last week's Bay Area Reporter incorrectly identified MCC-SF's the Reverend Karen Foster as Sutherin. We sincerely apologize.

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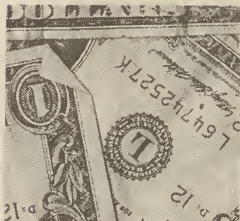
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STATEMENT FILE NO. 227203

The following person(s) are doing business as Studio Trans 677 Ellis St #2 San Francisco CA 94109. This business is conducted by a general partnership signed James M. Barker. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 11/30/98. The statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 12/01/98. DEC 10, 17, 23, 31 1998

STATEMENT FILE NO. 227412

The following person(s) are doing business as Eight Street Art & Furniture Gallery 1201 8th St. San Francisco, CA 94107. This business is conducted by co-partners Peter Alexander, David Baughman, signed Peter Alexander. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, N/A. The statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 12/10/98. DEC 17, 23, 31 JAN 7, 1998

STATEMENT FILE NO. 227487

The following person(s) are doing business as Arthur Robinson Associates 2261 Market St #314 San Francisco CA 94114. Ours Blanc Inc (A Calif Corp). This business is conducted by a corporation signed Arthur Robinson president. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 8/14/96. The statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 12/15/98. DEC 17, 23, 31, JAN 7, 1998

STATEMENT FILE NO. 227505

The following person(s) are doing business as Blackstone Productions 1201 Bowdoin St., San Francisco CA 94134. This business is conducted by an individual signed Curry J. Brooks Jr. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 12/15/98. The statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 12/15/98. DEC 23, 31, JAN 7, 14 1998

STATEMENT FILE NO. 227504

The following person(s) are doing business as Tom 101 Productions 880 Franklin St., #402, San Francisco CA 94102. This business is conducted by an individual signed Thomas Y. Chen. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 12/15/98. The statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 12/15/98. DEC 23, 31, JAN 7, 14 1998

STATEMENT FILE NO. 227491

The following person(s) are doing business as Threshold 77 Hermann St. #48, San Francisco CA 94102. This business is conducted by an individual signed John P. Walker. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 12/15/98. The statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 12/15/98. DEC 23, 31, JAN 7, 14 1998

STATEMENT FILE NO. 227607

The following person(s) are doing business as Charlie Graham Travel Arrangements 584 Castro St. #321 San Francisco CA 94114. This business is conducted by an individual signed Charles H. Graham. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, N/A. The statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 12/18/98. DEC 23, 31, JAN 7, 14 1998

STATEMENT FILE NO. 227536

The following person(s) are doing business as (1) The Isis Collection (2) Isis Apparel 1000 Brannan St, Rm 303, San Francisco CA 94103. This business is conducted by an general partnership, signed Constance Rivemate. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on, 12/15/98. The statement was filed with the County Clerk of the City and County of San Francisco, CA on 12/16/98. DEC 23, 31, JAN 7, 14 1998



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'Composing music is emotional math'
An interview with Bay Area composer
Lou Harrison, gay and full of genius.

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William McBrien's new
bio misses Cole Porter.

page 38



'Streetcar' on TV
SF Opera's 'A Streetcar
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page 36



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 28 • No. 52 • 24 December 1998

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by John F. Karr

Porn again: the return of Ken Ryker

A lot of cum, but an even larger amount of ink has been spilled over Ken Ryker recently, what with his abrupt departure from porn in the midst of shooting a film last year (due to an alleged religious awakening), and his subsequent return in his current comeback vehicle, *Ryker's Revenge*. At the time Ryker's first video appeared several years ago, I was shot down by its producer when I suggested that Ryker's uncomfortable performance might signal that he was gay for pay. Now, even Ryker admits to the truth of my supposition. And subsequent to the time-out he took to solidify his identity, he admits he has been exploring his gay sexuality.

That's nice for him. But a sexual performer's experience should not be gained in front of the camera. That robs viewers of the knowing sexuality and appreciation of men that an (as they say) avowed gay performer could provide. And recent interviews with Ryker and his co-stars cast him as basically straight, leaning toward bi. Here's some illuminating comments made in an Internet chat-room by Joey Hart, Ryker's current co-star: "Ken is a really cool guy who does gay porn for the money, mostly. I'm sure he's serious about being gay, but I

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SECOND OF TWO SECTIONS

by Roberto Friedman and the democacked party

How lovely to have the holiday season this year set against a backdrop of national madness! Had enough of the coup and the four-day war yet? Our favorite moment of the impeachment hearings was when Rep. **Loretta Sanchez** (D.-Orange Co.) exposed the machinations of the radical right by declaring, "They tried to steal my election, and now they're trying to steal the President's," before she was gavelled into silence. We think the bombing's stated purpose of "bringing democracy to Iraq" was ironic given its absence here. If the Republicans had spent as much energy trying to get **Saddam** out of power as they have doing the same for **Bill**, they'd have achieved their aims.

The annual **B.A.R. Xmas** party/bacchanalia, held last week safely after deadline at the timeless Hayes Valley *boite* the Blue Muse, keeps coming back to us in waves of hangoverlike nausea. We keep having flashbacks to the drinks-before-dinner portion of the evening, during which staffers, writers, photogs, illustrators, drivers and distributors wedged themselves into the intimate confines of the Muse's bar area, creat-



Art director Adrian Roberts with mezzo-soprano Karen Feder

ing an extra-special fire hazard not unlike the famous stateroom scene from the **Marx Bros.** classic *Monkey Business*. Movement was restricted yet animated: during this portion of the event, the goal is to down as many drinkies as possible before being thrown upon the mercy of the table wine.

Well, you know how spirits make some people silly and other folks surly. Alerted to the fact that a certain septuagenarian barfly columnist was setting her sights on us for one of her infamous sessions of tongue-lashing abuse

(and knowing that she had no earthly idea what we look like), we switched our name tags with art director **Adrian Roberts**, who was looking spectacularly festive in dog collar and heavy metal get-up, as he was going on to the **Mötley Crüe** concert après party (and then to the Bottom of the Hill, to see local wonderband **Crumb.**) Later, the darling creature told us with evident satisfaction, "[B.A.R. Political Editor] **Wayne Friday** saw the name tag and said he loves how I'm writing the Out There column!" And we love a masquerade.

Then it was time for the mad stampede to the dining room, a time-honored **B.A.R.** tradition. Our bud **Pepe**, who had to be dragged by the snout to his 5th, count 'em 5, **B.A.R. Xmas** party, brightened when he received his prime rib. A certain office manager, dressed in form-fitting velvet, proceeded to get completely and adorably snookered — also a **B.A.R.** tradition. Let's just say the evening degenerated rapidly from there. After toasts, tipples, and the ceremonial dispensing of the chocolates ("they're non-constipatory"), the truly fearless faced after-dinner drinks at the bar, further carousing in trendy Hayes Valley, and the dawn of another workday.

"the First Lady" by *Exam* staffers because she is married to executive editor (and **Leon Trotsky** grandnephew) **Phil Bronstein** (also widely known as "El Macho"), whisked feature writer **Jane Ganahl** from her seat when the band struck up and proceeded to whip her around the dancefloor, reminding on-lookers of a similar scene in *Basic Instinct*. Ganahl's ex-hubby, an *Exam* photog, was heard to mutter, "My ex-wife's come out as a lesbian — with Sharon Stone!" To people who know the scribe's perennial attraction to young studlies, this was a good laugh.

Out There

with Sharon Stone!" To people who know the scribe's perennial attraction to young studlies, this was a good laugh.



Rufus Wainwright

In the heartland

From a fellow ink-stained wretch we heard the following heart-warming tale from the world of rock 'n' roll (he heard it from a pal working as a roadie): When gay rising star **Rufus Wainwright** was chosen — rather inexplicably, we might add — as the opening act for rock band **Barenaked Ladies'** national tour earlier this year, the frat boys and assorted Neanderthals who came to the show were less than kind to our boy Rufus, who is not only courageously out, but let's face it, clearly queer — excuse us, we mean gay. Semantic distinctions didn't matter much to

the rock fans in middle America, who jeered RW and shouted truly distressing labels as in, "Get off the stage, fag!" Finally, the Ladies (all ostensibly straight boys) took to opening the show personally with the endorsement that they themselves had chosen Roofig for their opener — not strictly true, but it's the thought that counts — followed by a plea for their ignoramus fans to be a little more, uh, tolerant.

Though the Roofman's debut album has won widespread critical acclaim, our own Adrian Roberts (see above) was less impressed by Wainwright's recent appearance at the Great American Music Hall. "Three words," said Miss Roberts: "Gay **Billy Joel**."

Carrie that weight

The **Carrie White Xmas** event at the Castro Theatre last Friday night was remarkable for the assortment of entertainments indefatigable impresario **Marc Huestis** had assembled for our delectation. When it wasn't **Varla Jean Merman** and **Matthew Martin** performing their trouper's hearts out as they enacted numbers from the ill-fated *Carrie* musical, it was dragoon **Esmerelda** vocalizing spectacularly atop a draped stepladder, dressed in a Xmas tree/suit of lights which looked like it could have caused PG&E to blow another fuse all by itself. Once-and-future-star **Piper Laurie** appeared for her onstage interview by less-than-charismatic film critic **Michael Sragow** ("published in *The New York Times*... and the *SF Weekly*!") wearing sunglasses which she never took off, explaining, "A rose brushed my cornea." The highlight of Laurie's appearance was her disclosure that she was dating actor/President/vegetable **Ronald Reagan** when they starred together in her very first movie (at 18, she played the ingenue). Reagan was then (and still is) one year older than her father. Tellingly, she refused to say whether "the Gipster" conducted himself on these May-December dates as a perfect gentleman. What are the odds on retroactively impeaching Reagan? ▼



Piper Laurie in *Carrie*

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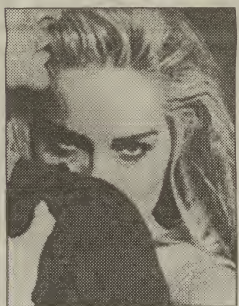
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Paper capers

And we thought our soirée was glamorous! We heard tell of the appearance of movie goddess **Sharon Stone** at the *Examiner* Xmas party. Stone, who is called



Sharon Stone in *Basic Instinct*

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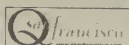
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Borscht Belt lesbian comic

Sara Cytron in 'Kung Pao Kosher Comedy'

by Richard Dodds

She's an old-school comic, but with an angle they didn't teach on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Sara Cytron grew up absorbing the styles of Jack Carter, Myron Cohen, Jackie Mason, Alan

King, and Joan Rivers on television, and she often hears from her own fans how her style reminds them of the traditional Borscht Belt comics. She talks about being from New York, about being Jewish, about her smothering family, and all those other targets that have supplied countless comics with endless punchlines. But Cytron is also a lesbian, and if her stylings have their roots in the Catskill soil, her material is definitely post-Stonewall.

"Some of it is political, and some of it has been sharp-edged," Cytron said of her material, "but a lot of it is just warmly humorous about the ridiculous aspects of being alive and the everyday things that happen when you are in a relationship."

Cytron, who still makes her home in Brooklyn, is in San Francisco this week to tell her jokes at *An Evening of Kung Pao Kosher Comedy*, the annual event that offers Jewish humor in a Chinese restaurant at Christmastime. Cytron is on a gay and straight bill with *Kung Pao* creator Lisa Geduldig, San Francisco comic Dan Lewis, and Borscht Belt veteran Freddie Roman.

"I think I'm right up the alley for this kind of booking," said Cytron, who had met Geduldig on the lesbian comedy circuit. "A lot of my act is crossover material for straights because there is so much shtick about Jewishness in my act that they can relate to if they're at least somewhat progressive. And I've been on tons of bills with gay men where it's a mixed audience, and that response has been very good."

Ready to laugh

Cytron, now 46, got serious about comedy 12 years ago when she was living in the Washington, D.C. area. Active in community theater, she found herself part of a somber program honoring the editor of the book *Nice Jewish Girls*. "I had written some comedy material with my partner at the time, and it was such a deadly serious evening that the people were just so ready to laugh," she said. "My partner said, 'You should really take this comedy thing seriously. You really have something there.'"

Those words became especially meaningful when Cytron's partner of many years died of

cancer shortly thereafter. Cytron then moved to New York and enrolled in a stand-up comedy class. "It was taught by this straight male comic, and I told him I would really like to do lesbian comedy for lesbians. He helped me structure some material, and by getting weekly exposure in front of the class, I got the nerve to start going to open mikes, and it just built from there."

Cytron writes much of her material with Harriet Malinowitz, who has been Cytron's partner for most of her years in comedy. After trying marriage at 22, Cytron came out at 25, and there were

Cytron is still friends with her ex-husband, who turned out to be gay himself, though she looks little like the woman in her wedding photos with the long hair and the dress. "I did give myself the freedom to look and be the way I wanted to, and yeah, I'm sure I absolutely convey 'lesbian' to people when they see me."

There is the cliché that lesbians don't have much of a sense of humor, a notion that Cytron, of course, rejects. "Like any group of oppressed people," she said, "there's a certain stage where you're kind of angry and resentful, but I think that got totally

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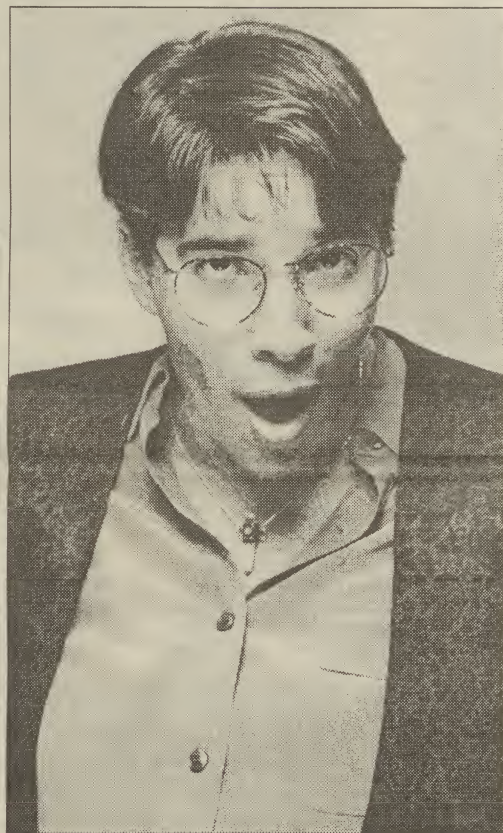
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Sara Cytron

tears and anger in the family before a decreasingly grudging acceptance took over. "My parents always include Harriet in an invitation, and they'll come to see my act," Cytron said. "I do have stuff in the act which only people who are lesbian or gay could even possibly appreciate, and my parents will laugh their heads off and I know they have no idea what I'm talking about."

While her sisters followed the traditional paths that their parents planned for them, Cytron knew from an early age that she was different. "I actually had my first relationship, as many girls do, in summer camp around the age of 12, except in my case, the relationship lasted from 12 to 16, and then recommenced at age 25 to 33, when Roma died. As passionately as I wanted to be together with her, there was a point when both of us were saying, 'Oh my God, we can't do this.' We were supposed to be interested in boys, and there was an attempt to do what we were supposed to do. For me, it got to the point of getting married."

overplayed. I definitely think we are as rich and diverse and intelligent and funny as any community, and when you are oppressed you've often forced into looking at things in interesting ways because you have that outsider's point of view."

For Cytron, comedy has always been a part-time affair that she did around her career as a personnel specialist dealing with labor law. Now that she has begun studying for a law degree at night, comedy will have to be seriously backburned for several years.

"I feel very much that I was meant to be in the field of law, but it took a long to have the confidence to do it," she said. "It is definitely a late-blooming career choice, and the big question is, will I hit menopause or graduate first?" ▼

An Evening of Kung Pao Kosher Comedy will run at the New Asia Restaurant through Dec. 27. Tickets are \$46 for the dinner shows and \$32 for the cocktail shows. Call 522-3737.

INTERVIEW

Waxing rhapsodic

An interview with Michael Feinstein

by Gregg Shapiro

On Michael & George: *Feinstein Sings Gershwin* (Concord Jazz), Michael Feinstein continues to treat the music of his forbearers with loving kindness, going that extra step by performing fifteen Gershwin songs, most in smartly orchestrated versions (such as "Nobody But You," "Of Thee I Sing," "Shall We Dance," "Soon") instead of his trademark piano and vocal (although you can find those renditions on "Love Is Here To Stay" and "Lonely Boy," to name a few). A special mention should be made of the fact that Feinstein has three openly gay male vocalists (David Lasley, Arnold McCuller, and Bruce Roberts) doing the backing vocals on the album.

Gregg Shapiro: You just recently finished an engagement at the much-talked-about Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas. Please tell us about your experience there.

Michael Feinstein: I was there for three weeks. The management of the hotel and the owner, Steve Wynn, were lovely people to work with. They took good care of me. It was amazing to be part of the opening of such an extraordinary place. They spent 1.6 billion dollars to create it, and the money shows. Everywhere you see the incredible craftsmanship that money can buy. The whole experience was a bit overwhelming, in that everything is done over the top there. Yet the audiences were terrific. The shows routinely had us turning away... this was a small showroom that held about 250 people, which was great to play in an intimate setting, especially with a six-piece group, but we were routinely turning away 50, 60, sometimes 80 people a night. It made me kind of sad, because I always feel bad for those people. It was Bellagio's desire to bring more "sophisticated entertainment to Las Vegas." The room that they had me in itself was really not ideally suited to entertainment.

In what way?

Because the location of the room... it's the only room in the hotel that people can walk through and see the fountains. They decided that it really would

be best for them not to use that room for shows, to use it as a place where people can sit down, have a drink, and look at the fountains, because there are these water shows every half hour. They are in the process of creating another room, I imagine a bigger one, that will be able to continue with the entertainment that I brought to it.

Do you foresee playing the Bellagio again?

Yes, I think I probably will. They have a desire to bring me back for several different things, including special events and such, so I'm sure that I will be back.

I was fortunate enough to have attended your concert at the Chicago Theater in September which was a celebration of George Gershwin's centennial, on his actual date of birth. Can you tell me what being part of such an event was like?

It's been a very exciting time because I've always loved Gershwin, from the time I was quite young, and it's amazing to me that it is George Gershwin's centennial, because I remember when I was in my teens it was his 75th birthday, and there was a lot of attention accorded George Gershwin at that time. The immense nature of the celebration, I think, would have surprised even the composer, because there are worldwide acknowledgments and celebrations of George Gershwin in a way that I never dreamed would happen. It was a special time for me because it gave me an opportunity not only to re-live and re-experience a lot of the memories I had during the time I was involved with Ira Gershwin, it also allowed me to bring to the public some lesser-known Gershwin songs alongside the popular ones, and put together some programs that allowed me to do material that I don't do all that often.

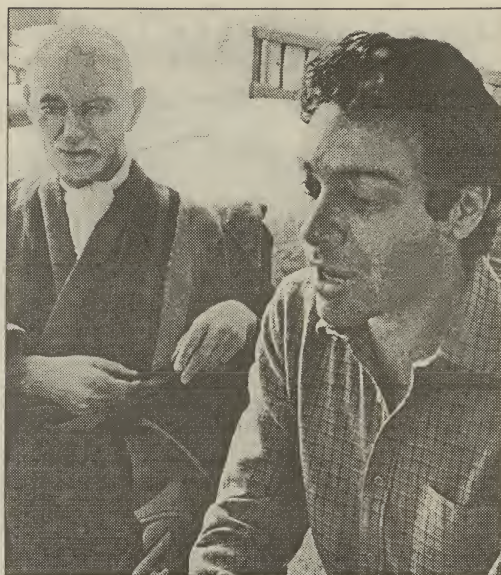
Have you heard any of the Gershwin tribute discs, such as *Red Hot + Rhapsody*, that have been recently released?

I've heard a lot of compilations of the older things. I wholeheartedly support the [Red Hot] Organization, and I am equally disinterested in contemporary interpretations of Gershwin, because

it's beside the point. After I heard the Cole Porter compilation [*Red Hot + Blue*], those interpretations had absolutely nothing to do with Cole Porter, and I don't see the point of it. It's like trying to improve on a Picasso painting by putting a mustache on it. It doesn't make any sense to me. I certainly believe that there are many different ways to interpret Gershwin, like all great compositions. However, it comes down to a matter of taste with how far you are going to go. I did hear one of the tracks, and I can't remember the artist because most of the names weren't familiar to me, and it just had nothing to do with Gershwin. I'm interested in hearing essentially the basis of what George Gershwin composed and the lyrics that Ira Gershwin wrote, and to hear people change them so drastically just simply doesn't interest me. But I certainly hope that they do well by the recording, and I hope it's a great success for them.

On your album *Michael and George*, you have a wonderful trio of some of my favorite back-up vocalists. You have David Lasley, Bruce Roberts, and Arnold McCuller, three of the best voices in the world, next to yours of course. How did you come together with the three of them?

I've known Bruce socially for many years and we've spoken



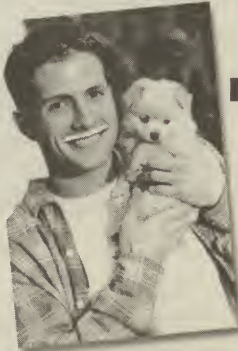
Ira Gershwin and Michael Feinstein at the piano

about doing some work together for as many years as we've been acquainted with each other. We were at Bruce's house one day and started talking about the Gershwin centennial and doing an album, and we went down to Bruce's studio and we literally just started on it. He turned on some equipment, flipped some switches, and we started doing an album. It grew out of the hanging out with Bruce. And then he brought David and Arnold in, and I was thrilled to be able to do that kind of a spin on the Gershwin songs. For me, to be able to push

the envelope a little bit, yet retain the essence of what the songs are about was the real trick. To be able to go a little bit farther, but use Gershwin's harmonies and certain things that I consider essential for the recognition of the pieces. It was a great challenge, and it was very exciting. That's one of the reasons that this recording is my favorite of all those that I've done. Usually, I'm not so positively-minded towards recordings because there are always things that I don't like. But this one, I really think that it was done so carefully

next page ►

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Willie the Shakes



This ink-stained young man is a struggling playwright suffering a bout of writer's block. His name is Will Shakespeare, and he's played to pouty perfection by Joseph Fiennes (Ralph's little brother) in director John Madden's *Shakespeare in Love*, opening Friday, December 25 in Bay Area theatres. Our boy Will puts aside his frustrations with his latest project (working title: *Romeo and Ethel*) to fall in love with Viola (Gwyneth Paltrow). Now here's the part that interests us: Viola wants to be an actor, but remember, this was Elizabethan England, and women are not allowed to perform in the theatre. Cleverly, she disguises herself as a man in order to audition for Shakespeare. So does Willie fall in love with the woman behind the man, or the man the woman becomes? It's a puzzlement most perplexing.

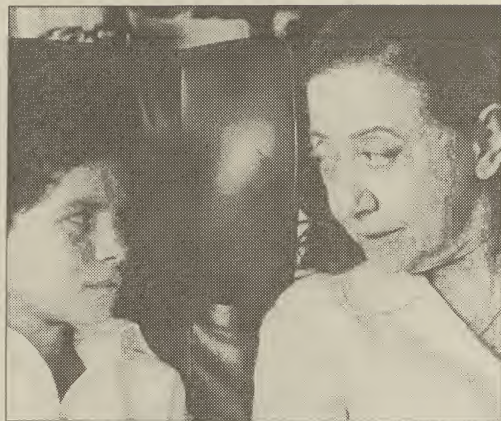
With a screenplay by acclaimed playwright Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman, *Shakespeare in Love* also stars Geoffrey Rush (*Shine*), Ben Affleck (*Good Will Hunting*), Colin Firth (*The English Patient*), and Judi Dench as Queen Elizabeth I. ▼

From Brazil, 'Central Station' Urchin story

by Gary Morris

In *Central Station*, Dora (Fernanda Montenegro) is a sixty-ish retired schoolteacher who spends her days in Rio's main depot making ends meet by writing letters for a cross-section of the city's illiterate. The seemingly helpful old lady is in fact a shyster who rips up most of these letters and stuffs others into a drawer for later disposal or mailing, according to her whim. When one of her victims is killed by a bus, she sells the woman's 9-year-old son Josué (Vinicius de Oliveira) to an alleged orphanage, but when her friend informs her he will probably be murdered for his internal organs, Dora swoops in and rescues him. Inexplicably, she suddenly becomes a veritable saint, deciding to personally make good on the dead woman's plea to reunite Josué with his long-lost drunk of a father in the remote northeast. They go on the lam into Brazil's impoverished desert countryside and have just the kinds of adventures we've seen in a thousand neorealist movies.

Indeed, the film is a virtual catalog of neorealist clichés, lacking only the usual "pissing urchin" and "plaintive prostitute" sequences. Dora and Josué hitchhike, take long bus rides through bleak landscapes, shoplift and almost get caught, stumble into a massive religious pilgrimage, go



Vinicius de Oliveira and Fernanda Montenegro in *Central Station*

to the fair and become part of the entertainment, run out of money and then get some through street smarts, and lose and find each other. And, oh yes, they talk about sex and the kid gets drunk in public.

Directed by Walter Salles and produced by Arthur Cohn (*Garden of the Finzi-Continis*), *Central Station* was a huge hit on this year's international film festival circuit, garnering both critics' awards and popular acclaim from audiences who couldn't get enough of the film's crusty-old-broad-meets-streetwise-urchin story. American audiences are expected to respond similarly; this one is being touted for an Academy Award nomination, and it will be more than surprising if it doesn't get one. Viewers who are allergic to clichés may not find the film quite so endearing as its makers

expect; some will resist Montenegro's funny-sad Greta Masina imitation, which reminds us that Masina remains inimitable; and some will see the cute but dull Oliveira as more bratty than touching. Salles also fails to develop some sequences; the religious pilgrimage, with thousands of suffering souls and wavering candles, seems to be there simply for decorative value. With its combination of social consciousness, sentimentality, and a storyline more comforting than challenging, *Central Station* should nonetheless find big audiences here and will surely deserve the Academy Award it will no doubt get. ▼

Central Station (in Portuguese with English subtitles) opens in the Bay Area on Friday, December 25.

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Feinstein

◀ previous page

ly. We really wanted to make sure that it would achieve something that was different from me and different for people who love Gershwin, and yet retain the essence. It's been a real joy.

In the past few months, there has been an increasing gay and lesbian presence on the jazz charts, with albums by performers such as Andy Bey, Fred Hersch, Patricia Barber, Gary Burton, and yourself, to name a few. Why do you think that is?

I think there's always been a gay and lesbian presence on the jazz charts, it's just that nobody has known who's gay and who isn't. I mean, Billy Strayhorn, who was Duke Ellington's right-hand guy, was gay. There's a lot of us everywhere. There happen to be some people who are on the charts now who haven't hidden the fact about who they are in that realm. I think that most people are not even going to be aware of the gay presence unless they are gay. Unless you are a music executive who looks at the chart and says, "Hmmm, look at all those gay people. Hey, we've got a new market." It's like when I was with Atlantic Records, they started a gay marketing department to try and capture the gay dollar because they learned, albeit belatedly, that there's a lot of money there. I think the bottom line, of course,



Michael Feinstein

is that the people on those charts are talented people. There's no question that the gay lifestyle has produced an extraordinary number of very talented people. I'm glad to be on the charts at this time. ▼

FILM

Lord, our load is heavy

'Dancing at Lughnasa's long-suffering sisters make dreary company

by Matthew Kennedy

By all reports, it made fine theater. Playwright Brian Friel fashioned a warm and sad tribute to five middle-aged sisters living hand-to-mouth on a modest farm in rural Ireland of 1936. One has an illegitimate son, Michael, and all five focus their love on the boy. His wastrel of a father wanders back into the scene long enough to break hearts all over again and then leave to fight in the Spanish Civil War. Elder brother Jack, a priest living in Africa for 25 years, comes back to the hearth, too. The women, however, are the focus of this story as they struggle and scrape by until the inevitable dissolving of the family.

Dancing at Lughnasa presents itself as a memory piece celebrating sentiment and a special time in a child's life. Narrated by Michael as a grown up, its attempts at resurrecting a distant personal past fall far short of any classic of the genre. There are faint echoes of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, *I Remember Mama* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but one has only to see any one of them again to feel an aching deficit in this current offering.

Why, pray tell, does this make for an excruciating movie? For starters, nagging questions distract from the story at hand. We never know why the sisters failed to get a life or why the sororal bonds of the natal family kept them together for so long. No mention of the parents is made and, okay, perhaps there's a sex-ratio imbalance in Ireland, but all five are old maids! We don't know why they deny each other privacy, one of them can't have a little fun with a local guy without the others sending out a posse. Such concern doesn't appear as love, it appears as dysfunction. Perhaps these details aren't supposed to matter, but in

a movie where nothing happens, they matter a lot.

Foam party

Dancing at Lughnasa teases with possible danger repeatedly, either by plot machinations or unspoken suggestion. The son-nephew Michael goes off with his dad on a motorbike and everyone foams — will he be hurt? The slow Rose complains of a blistering headache — does she have a tumor? Jack wanders around the countryside in a post-missionary existential stupor — will he fall into a ditch? Nothing happens of any consequence until the last five minutes, when a lifetime of trauma is filtered through one hasty voice over narration. Such creative ineptitude — an inert movie ends in a weird convulsion.

The game cast labors, oh, how they labor, to breathe life, love and feeling into a barren script by Frank McGuinness and lethargic direction by Pat O'Connor. But, alas, everyone is a case study in underwritten characters rendered in primary colors. Eldest sister (Meryl Streep, no less) is uptight, Rose (Sophie Thompson) is dim, Maggie (Kathy Burke) is earthy, Agnes (Brid Brennan) is stoic, and Christina (Catherine McCormack) is romantic. Any deeper nuances are strictly hit and miss. Then there's Jack, who returns from Africa suffering one of those unspecified "gone native" mental afflictions that usually strike the British (*A Room With a View*, *A Passage to India*, *Lawrence of Arabia*). Even decorated stage actor Michael Gambon can't save this role from unintentional comedy.

The actors all have strong credits on their résumés. McCormack was Mel Gibson's ill-fated squeeze in *Braveheart*, Burke was the hilarious wheeler-dealer editor of *Absolutely Fabulous* (this is a real transformation), and Brennan won a Tony for her stage Agnes. As for Streep, she is mis-



Catherine McCormack, Darrell Johnston, Meryl Streep, and Kathy Burke in *Dancing at Lughnasa*.

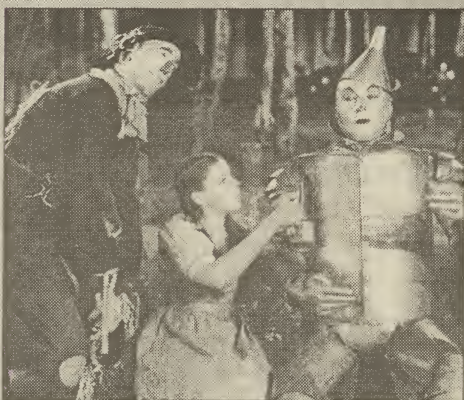
cast, slumming with an ensemble of actors far less known. She's up to the task of playing a prim, cold, overly protective spinster, though she falls into her patented bad habit of eyeball overacting. The problem is her baggage. She simply can't hide her history behind a well-intended low budget indie; her presence throws the movie way off balance. She's Godzilla at a tea party.

Adaptations are so tricky, and plays do not have a head start on books, despite their common acting origins. Think *A Chorus Line*, *Frankie and Johnny*, *Plenty* (another Streep misfire), or last year's unendurable *Bent*. *Dancing at Lughnasa* belongs on this pile of woe. O'Connor *et. al.* attempted to open up a respected play without properly exploiting the possibilities of film. What they made looks like a lump of clay drying in the sun. ▼

Dancing at Lughnasa opens Friday, Dec. 25.



It takes a wiz



The press release for the Christmas week engagement of the restored *The Wizard of Oz* at the Castro Theatre December 25-31 features a *New Yorker* cartoon in which Dorothy adds to her list of requests from the Wizard: "And, please, sir, would it be too much to ask for a large and devoted gay following?"

Not too much at all, girl, as will be readily apparent by the mobs of adoring gay fans during the re-release of the MGM classic at our most revered movie palace. Judy Garland, Bert Lahr, Ray Bolger, Jack Haley, Margaret Hamilton, and Billie Burke give immortal performances; the songs by composer Harold Arlen and lyricist Yip Harburg are timeless; and let's not forget those wild 'n' crazy Munchkins! If you've only seen it on the boob tube, this would be your chance to see it in all its Silver Screen glory. Starts Friday. ▼

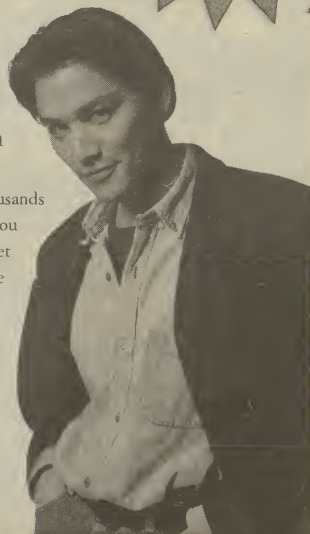
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Straight to video

SFO's 'A Streetcar Named Desire' on PBS

by Stephanie von Buchau

André Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, premiered by the San Francisco Opera on September 19 and to be televised on PBS' *Great Performances* Wednesday, December 30, is the second such commissioned world premiere of an opera in English by our local company to make its way directly to TV.

No expense was spared in either case by SFO. They hired the best looking, best singing, best acting young American artists, all of them ravishingly telegenic. Both televised productions are stunning, far more involving and moving on the tube than they had been on the stage of the War Memorial. This raises a huge, uncomfortable question about the nature and future of such opera commissions.

Streetcar, like Conrad Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons*, has a libretto by Los Angeles poet and playwright Philip Littell. Working under severe constraints from the celebrated writer's executors, Littell trimmed and tightened Tennessee Williams' justly-celebrated play about a deranged Southern belle who "depends on the kindness of strangers." While Previn provides a pleasant, derivative (of Britten, Strauss and Shostakovich, among others) score, this *Streetcar* could have been presented without the music and made the same impact.

Operatic music is supposed to create emotion out of the inexpressible—that's why people sing in opera when they are dying or making love, something they obviously wouldn't do in mundane real life. Yet the music to *Streetcar* (and to *Dangerous Liaisons*) expresses virtually nothing. I watched the opera on stage twice, dry-eyed, yet during the TV recreation, I puddled up several times in the last act. Why? Because



Baritone Rodney Gilfry and soprano Renée Fleming in San Francisco Opera's production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

derivative aria) couldn't be clearer on Fleming's expressive face. Her eyes, which you can't see on the opera stage, are truly the windows to Blanche's soul.

Pumped up

The same goes for Rodney Gilfry's Stanley Kowalski. Previn has written him unsympathetic music, which is okay because Gilfry hasn't much of a voice, but he pumped up for the role, looks

morrow and segue directly to movies. And therein lies the big problem for this sort of opera. Why should all of these artists be so much more believable and moving on TV? After all, the video is a combination of several live performances, which means that these singing actors were doing the same thing on stage that they are doing on TV. What is the difference?

Music is the difference. To put it bluntly, in *Streetcar* and *Liaisons* there is no great music to get in the way of all that great acting. Opera is a music-driven medium in which the greatest acting is vocal. Maria Callas and Leonie Rysanek, the two most memorable singing actresses of our time, frankly looked ludicrous in close-up. Their big gestures and big voices created illusions in a big opera house, and opera is still about illusion, not about reality. That's why the hugely fat Audrey Stottler is a convincing love object as Turandot. She has those mystical operatic chops that have nothing to do with her weight, even though she has been told by SFO that she won't be asked back unless she loses a lot of it.

Lotfi Mansouri and SFO may be fulfilling their mandate in trying to bring us new music, but their by-now obsessive desire to make opera "accessible" (i.e. to make it into something that it isn't) has caused them to hire wallpaper composers to write background music for terrific TV shows. Why not spare the on-stage expenses and ship these so-called "operas" direct to video? That is certainly where *A Streetcar Named Desire* fares best. ▼

Renée Fleming, who was undervalued by all critics at the premiere, turns out to be ready for her close-up. With the camera tight on her beautiful face, that somewhat generalized, blowzy quality that has attached itself to her operatic singing and acting disappears.

Renée Fleming, who was undervalued by all critics (including myself) at the premiere, turns out to be ready for her close-up.

With the camera tight on her beautiful face, that somewhat generalized, blowzy quality that has attached itself to her operatic singing and acting disappears. Every nuance of poor Blanche's distorted mind—the initial shaky, liquor-seeking persona, the tremulous seductress stealing a kiss from the newspaper collector (dishy Jeffrey Lentz, who also benefits from close-ups), the self-deluded romantic singing "I want magic," the lost soul fantasizing about dying at sea (in the opera's most beautiful and most

great with his shirt off, out-howls Brando in the play's most celebrated line, and is a brutally intense actor. You can't help wondering if Fleming was really afraid of him by the end of the run. Elizabeth Futral is also a wonderfully specific actress with a lovely voice, though her Stella on stage was so tremendous (mainly because her music tended to soar) that she could hardly better it on TV.

Anthony Dean Griffey's sappy suitor Mitch once again nearly steals the show, while Judith Forst (Eunice), never very convincing in star mezzo roles, has turned into such a good character actress that she could forsake opera to

A Streetcar Named Desire airs Wednesday, December 30 at 8:30 p.m. on KQED-TV, Ch. 9

MUSIC

Exuberant creation

Lou Harrison, composer extraordinaire

by Bob Roehr

Lou Harrison looks like a California version of Santa Claus. He has the full white beard, the ample girth, and especially the twinkle of joviality in his eye. In place of fur-trimmed scarlet, Harrison is decked out in a flowered Hawaiian shirt. The milk and cookies are strictly vegetarian.

He says he is "an old man who has had a lot of fun." The odometer may have ticked off 81 years, but in his presence one feels the fun, not the mileage.

He began writing music virtually from puberty and has not stopped. As a teenager in the 1930s, he studied with noted composer Henry Cowell in San Francisco. When Cowell went to jail for four years on a morals charge of homosexuality, the young Harrison visited regularly, ferrying scores back and forth from San Quentin. He muses, "I only recently realized that I was having lessons through the bars, and the prodigious amount of work he [Cowell] did there."

Harrison had long realized that he was gay and by 20 was now living with his first boyfriend. They seemed to come and last for "more or less a regulation three years in succession," until he met Bill Colvig in 1967. He says the secret of their enduring relationship is mutual interests, chief of which are music, instruments, and love of the outdoors.

The move to New York City in 1943 evokes decidedly mixed memories of the stay. "It was constant noise, inescapable noise. I have the memory that I didn't sleep for a couple of weeks when I first went there because the whole city rumbles, or did then."

Harrison worked a menagerie of jobs, from elevator operator to music critic for Virgil Thomson at the *Herald Tribune*. He met the music and gay elites, often overlapping circles. Among them was his second mentor, the eminent [not-gay] Charles Ives. He copied and edited the master's scores, and even conducted the premiere of Ives' Third Symphony, to rave reviews. He built his own instruments in his little apartment and continued to write music, including one of his most frequently performed works, *Solstice*.

A major part of life for a twenty-something gay man living in Greenwich Village, then as now, was cruising the streets, parks, and subways. "During the war it

was wide open," says Harrison. "It was, you make eye contact and that was it, your place or mine?"

The stress of city living and an unstable personal life built to a nervous breakdown in the late 1940s and a nine-month stay in a psychiatric clinic, arranged by friend and fellow composer John Cage. Harrison says, "I discovered that I was not a New Yorker."

Rim jobs

The early 1950s brought a return to his geographic roots. He settled south of San Francisco in Aptos, then a small fishing town, now engulfed by the suburban sprawl of Silicon Valley. Numerous fellowship programs and guest teaching assignments have taken him around the Pacific Rim.

For Harrison, composing music is "emotional math. Once you've got the rhythm right the only other thing you can do is choose the tones, and that means the relation between them." That sounds cold, mechanical, while Harrison's works are anything but cold. Each musical creation carries the personality of its very exuberant maker.

His compositions span the gamut from traditional symphonies to solo pieces for esoteric instruments. He is fond of medieval rhythms, adores percussion, and is an advocate of the music of Asia. He has the uncanny ability to absorb Eastern traditions and meld them with those of the West to make a sound that is both new and familiar to the ear.

The gamelan "is simply the most beautiful musical ensemble of the face of the planet," he says swooning with rapture. Harrison is one of America's most fervent advocates for the Javanese ensemble music. A gamelan consists of gongs, metal bars, and cylinders precisely tuned in ratio to each other. No two sound quite exactly the same.

"Everyone [in the ensemble] is expected to be able to play any part in it," he explains. "Now imagine asking your first flutist to be able to play the contrabass. It's a difference in attitude." He is especially attracted to the fact that "you learn how to cooperate, quite elaborately sometimes, with everybody." He built two of the earliest gamelans in this country and proselytized by writing and recording music played on them.

Harrison recently completed a major revision of *Young Caesar*, which is the only overt gay opera in the repertoire. It started as a puppet opera, playing up and

down the West Coast in the early 1970s.

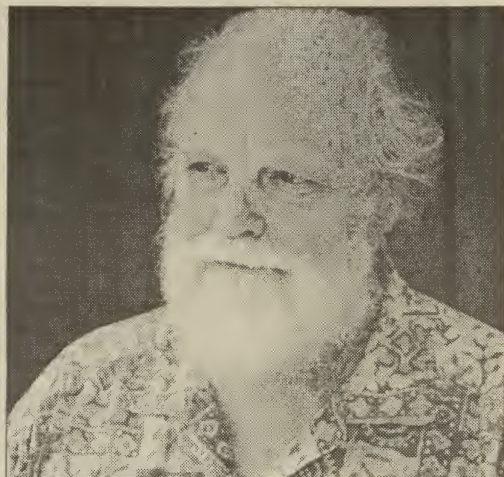
He revised the intimate work for the 90-member Portland Gay Men's Chorus in 1988. Listening to those two performances, Harrison felt "it really works." But he "just decided that the thing needs arias, like pillars, to hold it up. Someone to come out and sing about it." There are plans to stage the newest version of *Young Caesar* at Lincoln Center in the summer of either 1999 or 2000.

Faerie sense

Harrison's life embodies an older, broader, genteel bohemian tradition of the arts, plus a radical faerie sense of whimsy. His interests are not confined to music. He is a published poet, an accomplished painter, the creator of several fonts of type, and an enthusiastic teacher.

He has embraced his homosexuality from the start and lived openly, not in a defiant manner but in a celebratory one. Many of his works are dedicated to boyfriends. In 1942, in the middle of World War II, he told the draft board he was gay and they classified him 4-F. "They didn't want me, and I didn't want them," he says with a grin.

During the McCarthyism of the 1950s he spoke publicly "about being gay." In the 1960s he was a member of San Francisco's Society for Individual Rights (SIR), one of the earliest gay orga-



Composer Lou Harrison

nizations, where he taught classes and ran program activities. And of course, his professional inspiration and collaboration often have had a gay component.

But to call him a gay composer would be a misnomer. He is

simply one of the most creative and innovative American composers of this century. And, more than anything else, he has led a principled life, living it to the fullest. Lou Harrison indeed has had a lot of fun. ▼



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To learn more about Lou Harrison:

Lou Harrison: *Composing a World* by Leta E. Miller and Fredric Lieberman (Oxford University Press, \$35) Some chapters dealing with music theory may be rather hard-going for the general reader. A music CD of Harrison's work accompanies the book.

Recordings: The gamelan is showcased on *Music of Lou Harrison* (CRI CD613). More traditional listeners might want to start with *Lou Harrison: A Portrait* (Argo 455 590-2) or *Lou Harrison: Third Symphony & Grand Duo* (MusicMasters 7073-2-C). Jazz devotees will enjoy Keith Jarrett on *Works by Lou Harrison* (New World Records NW 366-2). ▼

Lou Harrison is joined by Leta Miller and Fredric Lieberman, co-authors of *Lou Harrison: Composing a World*, for a talk and book signing on Thurs., Jan. 14, 7 p.m. at the Booksmith, 1644 Haight St. Call 863-8688.

Not the top

by Tavo Amador

Cole Porter, A Biography, by William McBrien; Knopf, \$30

William McBrien's new biography of Cole Porter will not keep you reading night and day. It is not nice to come home to, and you will not reach for it in the still of the night. Why? Because it never gets under Cole Porter's skin. While it won't drive you to the depths on the ninetieth floor, neither will it make you feel like ridin' high.

Porter, born in Peru, Indiana in 1891 to a wealthy family, had a profound impact on American popular music, which from 1930 to 1960 (the era in which he flourished) was synonymous with Broadway and Hollywood musicals. His complex melodies and elegant, witty, passionate lyrics often reflected his homoerotic and homosexual perspective. Yet the first time McBrien mentions Porter's sexual orientation is 25 pages after Cole's 1919 marriage to the wealthy, beautiful, and socially well-connected divorcee Linda Lee Thomas.

Suddenly, we learn that Porter had fallen in love with Boris Kochno, a member of Serge Diaghilev's Ballet Russe company. While not making a big deal of Porter's sexuality is admirable, given the era in which he lived, learning something about his coming out process is important. If reliable information is not available, McBrien should say so. Nonetheless, some knowledgeable speculation is in order. For example, while at Yale, Porter became friends with gay English actor/director Monty Woolley (best remembered today for his stage triumph as *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, repeated successfully in the 1942 film with Bette Davis.) Was their mutual homosexuality an immediate link? Amazingly, McBrien doesn't comment, and doesn't even mention that Woolley was gay until

deep in the book.

In any case, Cole and Linda Porter enjoyed a classic marriage of convenience, and her belief in his musical gifts during the long period before his first hit never wavered. The Porters and the *beau monde* in which they dwelled practiced a "don't ask, don't tell" policy about homosexuality, which merits more analysis than McBrien provides. Porter's rocky path to success, however, is chronicled in detail like a list song, a form he invented with "Let's Do It." Unfortunately, little distinction is made between the salient and the trivial.

McBrien quotes extensively from Porter's lyrics, the musicals for which they were written, and the battles with censors who complained about his suggestive phrases. This is the best part of the book, although it sometimes reads like another openin', another show. All the usual suspects are here: Ethel Merman (who starred in five hit Porter musicals), Fred Astaire, Mary Martin, Sophie Tucker, Bert Lahr, Jimmy Durante, Bob Hope, Elsa Maxwell, Noel Coward, Irving Berlin (whose idiomatic lyrics Porter very much admired), Clifton Webb, Gwen Verdon, and Gene Kelly, among many others.

Passion play

Even so, surprising omissions abound. It would be great to learn about the circumstances under which Porter wrote "The Laziest Gal In Town" for Marlene Dietrich to sing in Alfred Hitchcock's *Stage Fright* (1950), or the show for which he composed "An Occasional Man," with its gay perspective. ("If you're on shore leave/ and your face is kinda cute/ perhaps by your leave/ I can be your passion fruit.") Neither song is mentioned.

Although Porter, variously described as aloof, shy, snobbish, generous, elegant, unaffected, loyal, rigid, and bigoted (his long friendship with Woolley cooled in the early sixties when the latter

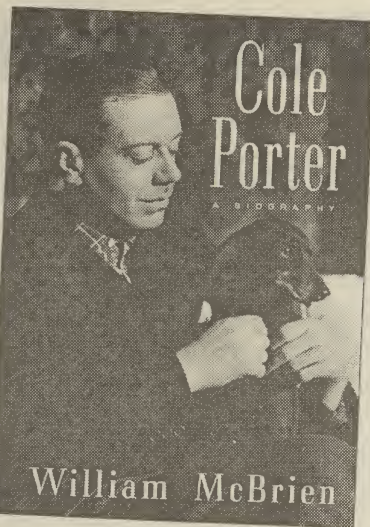
took a black manservant as his lover), does not appear to have been easy to love, his discipline and achievements are admirable. Badly injured in a horse-riding accident in 1937, plagued by constant pain and frequent operations on his legs, he continued working and traveling with remarkable stoicism.

Dismissed as finished by critics in the mid-forties, Porter responded with his greatest show, *Kiss Me Kate* in 1948, and had subsequent hits with *Can Can*, *Silk Stockings*, and the film *High Society*. But the amputation of his right leg in 1958 left him so depressed that he stopped composing. He died in 1964, plagued by alcoholism, malnutrition (he insisted on guests for dinner and lunch, but would barely eat), and chronic pain. He grew so taciturn that friends found being with him stressful.

Yet for all that McBrien tells us about Porter, we never get a sense

of what he was really like. Perhaps his true self is revealed in his music.

While McBrien links lyrics with stages of Porter's life, particularly with his romances — which, while detailed, start and fade away with little explanation — the results are sporadic and unconvincing. He does succeed in showing that Porter's dilettante pose was just that. He was a tireless worker, a perfectionist whose legacy shows no sign of diminishing.



It would be great to say this well-researched tome was delovely. Alas, it filled me with the such ennui that I got no kick from it. ▼

Flavorful feast

Audra McDonald sings her heart out

by Jim Van Buskirk

Audra McDonald is everywhere this fall. She is currently on Broadway continuing in her Tony award-winning role as Sarah in *Ragtime*. She recently appeared in Michael Tilson Thomas' celebration of George Gershwin's 100th birthday both at Davies Symphony Hall and at Carnegie Hall, the New York version of which was televised on PBS. On three Monday nights in mid-October she inaugurated Joe's Pub, the new cabaret at the Joseph Papp Public Theater in NYC. If you looked carefully you might have caught her cameo as

the wedding singer in Nick Hytner's *The Object of My Affection*. And now comes her much-awaited debut album, *Audra McDonald: Way Back to Paradise* (Nonesuch).

What has she chosen to record? Obviously, the Fresno native whose operatic mezzo-soprano earned her a first Tony as Carrie Pipperidge in *Carousel* and a second in Terrence McNally's *Master Class*, and who appears in a couple of cuts on the 1996 album *Leonard Bernstein's New York* can sing just about anything she wants. But, true to form, this 28-year-old has put together an eclectic collection of art songs and compositions from contemporary Broadway shows.

The album opens, pauses mid-stream, and closes with the first recordings of three pieces from Ricky Ian Gordon's song-cycle *Only Heaven*: "Dream Variations," "Song for a Dark Girl," and "Daybreak in Alabama" all share powerfully evocative texts by Langston Hughes. An additional "Lullaby" by Gordon features a text by James Agee, beginning gently, then building to a searing finish. Another newly recorded song is Jenny Giering's plaintive "I Follow," a duet with Theresa McCarthy.

'Hello' kitty

Two songs are from Michael John LaChiusa's 1994 musical *Hello Again*, based on Schnitzler's *La Ronde*: "Tom" (who makes her forget her husband's name, her lover's name) and the sexy, sassy "Mistress of the Senator" ("I'll play Jackie better than Jackie did/ and not use a hat.") In the title track, a duet with Dawn Upshaw from LaChiusa's upcoming *Marie Christine*, a retelling of the Medea myth, the women sing of the roles they must play to find their "Way Back to Paradise."

McDonald sings "Come to Jesus" with composer Adam Guettel, from his show *Saturn Returns*, followed by two additional songs Guettel wrote specifically for her to introduce on this album: "A Tragic Story" and "Baby Moon," sung to an unborn child:



Audra McDonald

"But I'm a singer, and I can sing to you/ The sound of what you mean to me."

"You Don't Know this Man" from Jason Robert Brown's soon-to-open *Parade* is a dramatic diatribe against bigotry. From his 1995 revue *Songs for a New World* comes a story song about what we expect from relationships and whether we ever get the promised "Stars and the Moon."

Don't fear that most of this material is unfamiliar. These songs are rich and complicated, unfolding with repeated listenings. They are also perfectly suited to McDonald's interpretations. She is alternately a languid breeze and a tempestuous storm, a gently rolling river and a raging, roiling sea. She is funny and melancholy, then filled with joy and heartache. Describing McDonald's voice in his liner notes, Terrence McNally invokes the gifts of Streisand, Garland, and Callas. One might think he is indulging in hyperbole, but he's right: McDonald is truly as exciting as these divas.

This exquisite album is full of so many fascinating flavors, you may find yourself torn between wanting to devour the entire 49 minutes in one indulgent listening and savoring each song in bite-size morsels. Either way, it's a delicious treat. ▼

After he worked through the night.
Rudolph relaxed in our jacuzzi.

Happy Holidays!



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BOOKS

Watching the detective

by Dan Blue

Love Undetectable: Notes on Friendship, Sex, and Survival by Andrew Sullivan; Knopf, \$23

The age is awash in autobiography, and the question arises: What are these people thinking? Why should they believe we want to read about their lives? In some cases — the ghost-written works of media figures — the protagonists are already famous and provide background for a curious public. In other words, they're gossiping about themselves. Others — not so famous — offer themselves as exemplary figures. "I'm thinking what you're thinking. You'll see yourself in me," they promise.

Andrew Sullivan's new book, *Love Undetectable*, falls into the second camp, although it is not, strictly speaking, an autobiography at all. On the surface it offers three essays which focus, more or less, on the legacy of AIDS. The first piece, "When Plagues End," describes the euphoria and depressions which accompany an apparent reprieve of the plague, at least among wealthier American males. What do we owe the dead, and how can we carry our hard-won lessons and achievements into the future?

"Virtually Abnormal," the second piece, describes the work of reparative therapists (the people

who want to change us), and investigates supposed causes of homosexuality. Finally, "If Love Were All" celebrates friendship, investigates its history, and examines its power in the gay community during the plague years.

Obviously, all three essays have a public thematic which Sullivan deftly argues. Even readers who fail to identify with his personal reactions will find these pieces stimulating. Scattered throughout, however, are personal remembrances which will remind some readers of their own experience. As fans of his previous

sonal illustration. In *Love Undetectable*, Sullivan deliberately puts them center stage. "My first book was about politics," he said in recent interview. "This one is about life." He implied that life and memory are messy processes which do not lend themselves to such neat arrangements as political theory.

Water and oil

The formal structure of *Love Undetectable* is therefore something of an experiment, and it's an experiment which goes wrong. While the second essay is con-

each is too autonomous and powerful to lend itself to a larger structure. The sections displace one another, rather than build.

After all this criticism, it's only fair to say that most readers won't care. *Love Undetectable* will rightly be read for its fragments, and when the fragments are this good, most of us will be happy to let the architecture collapse to the floor. Sullivan's meditation on the AIDS quilt beautifully captures the pathos of kitsch. His discussion of how sex is essential to moral integrity is a little masterpiece. His account of scattering a friend's ashes delivers a breathtaking shock. And a narration of how he experienced a religious epiphany compares with Proust in its attempt to pin down the ineffable and localize an elusive psychic experience into specific, sensuously realized occasions.

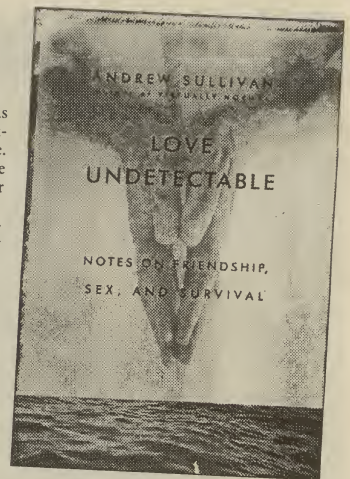
Now the hard question. How representative is Andrew Sullivan? While many readers will identify with his personal reflections, others will not. Yet he switches pronouns from "I" to "we" with alarming ease, as though he spoke for the entire gay community. Worse, his eloquence may persuade readers to forget that he consistently favors the dark sides of gay life — the sense of guilt and

Sullivan switches pronouns from 'I' to 'we' with alarming ease, as though he spoke for the entire gay community.

book, *Virtually Normal*, know, Sullivan has intellect, sensitivity, and an uncanny gift for language and mood. When he trains all of these on a memory or feeling, he releases them from mere anecdotes to a communal experience which countless readers will recognize and share.

In *Virtually Normal*, these biographical meditations were yoked to a logical argument and largely confined to peripheral chapters and the occasional per-

ceived in the image of *Virtually Normal* and comes out fine, the first and third seem assembled out of individual sketches rather than envisioned as wholes. The third in particular is composed of elements of such different emotional weight — memories of a passionately beloved friend, and analyses of Cicero and Aristotle — that the parts repel one another like water and oil, and one reader, at least, was ready to toss it across the room. "When Plagues End," by contrast, consists of individually brilliant fragments, every section a small masterpiece. Yet



shame which the dominant culture tries all too successfully to foist on us. We need not fault Sullivan for this. Artists don't get to choose their obsessions, and if he happens to be more attuned to the Augustinian side of gay life, we should be grateful he does it so well.

Nonetheless, he does somewhat swamp the boat. We lack authors who write so convincingly about the bright side as Sullivan about the dark, and that poses a problem. It's not Sullivan's problem, nor is it the reader's when immersed in his book. We'll just have to wait for other writers. Meanwhile, we are starved for news of ourselves, and any artist who can meet our interests and light up our secrets deserves our gratitude and love. ▼

Urban pioneers

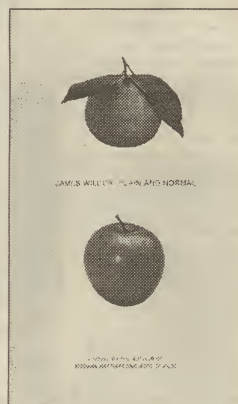
by Robert Julian

Plain and Normal by James Wilcox; Little Brown, \$24

James Wilcox's seventh novel is a quirky amalgam of Manhattan manners, blown through Tula Springs, Louisiana. Lloyd Norris and his ex-wife Pearl Fay find themselves cohabiting once again in their Yonkers home, long after their divorce is final. Lloyd and Pearl Fay, consistently referred to in the novel as Mr. and Mrs. Norris, are the best of friends. Mr. Norris, however, is gay, and Mrs. Norris keeps trying to get her fortysomething ex-husband into the swing of Manhattan gay life. But the terminally dull and sexually frustrated Mr. Norris just isn't taking the bait.

Mrs. Norris, unable to settle into uptown ways, is content to live in Yonkers and sew dance costumes for local students. Their shared Louisiana upbringing keeps the two former spouses somewhat behind in city ways, but it doesn't deter them from trying to fit their square-peg lives into the many round holes of Manhattan and its environs.

Sexuality and sexual frustrations are the recurring themes of the comic *Plain and Normal*. And naturally, the definition of "normal" is very much up for grabs in Wilcox's writing. Mrs. Norris takes in a radical lesbian border; Mr. Norris gets promoted, and soon his former boss ends up having an affair with his ex-wife; and Mr. Norris' secretary — the middle-aged Mrs. Kundaa — turns out to be an heiress, Vietnam War veteran, and titled English nobility. Hardly anyone is who he seems to be, and no one, with the excep-



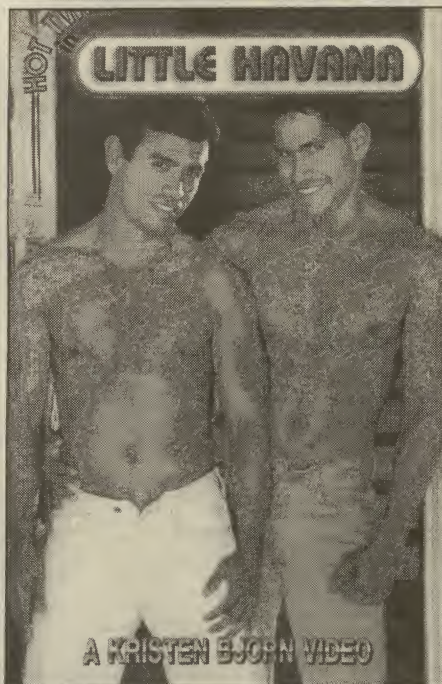
tion of Mrs. Norris, is getting laid.

Wilcox has a deft hand at comic dialogue, and many of his exchanges rise to the level of great screwball comedy. At his best, Wilcox pens oxymoronic dialogue that recalls the brilliance of Abbott and Costello's classic "Who's on first?" routine. But at his worst, his cornpone sitcom set-ups can play like a bad episode of Vicki Lawrence's *Mama's Family*.

Plain and Normal is a silly, slight piece of writing that follows Mr. Norris up the Manhattan corporate ladder (in spite of himself) and out of the closet, while charming the reader with the author's skewed, outsider perspective on life in the Big Apple. And occasionally Wilcox produces a simile that is positively inspirational: "A smile made Mr. Lewis look as serene and mysterious as a room opening up to a farther room in a Vermeer." For light reading with a humorous bent, you could do much worse than *Plain and Normal*. ▼

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All the Whos down in Whoville

by Victoria A. Brownworth

It was the night 'fore impeachment and all through the House, Representatives grumbled and grouched. The articles were writ for them by the Chair, in hopes a Republican soon would be there.

Talk about your blue Christmas! The Judiciary Committee hearings, House vote on impeachment, a little air war over Iraq, a disclosure by the once-and-future Speaker of the House, and a partisan in a pear tree. In this atmosphere it's been difficult to choose one Grinch for 1998: Tom DeLay? Bob Livingston? Former Clinton staffer George "Call

Me Quisling" Stephanopoulos? We also raised an eyebrow when Bob "Cotton Mather" Barr from the state that gave us Newt Gingrich got caught courting the white supremacy vote. Nice touch. We love having our stereotypes validated. And for those who sleep in on Sunday mornings, Henry Hyde compared himself to Jesus on NBC's *Meet the Press*. Perhaps he got caught up in the spirit of the season — or more likely got caught being the blasphemous, sanctimonious prig we always knew he was.

We were very young during Watergate; our parents made us watch the hearings because it was "history in the making." Thus we found ourselves quoting those same words last week regarding Impeachment Redux. It was not, however, the route to holiday spirit. (All those Southerners made us reach for the gin. Barr actually complained that the [damned Yankee] Democrats talked too fast. Yup... suuuore do.)

In fact, the spectacle was more depressing than watching *It's a Wonderful Life* and knowing George Bailey won't kill himself. So we broke out the eggnog and watched the *Lawrence Welk Christmas Special* (the Lennon sisters are not aging well, but Norma Zimmer looks fabulous for 147 — why isn't she in an Old Navy commercial?). Then the *Kathie Lee Gifford Inspirational Christmas Special* (does she go to

the salon and say "give me a color nobody else has?" or is her hair done *gratis* by her illegal immigrant labor and L'Oreal doesn't print directions in Spanish?). Then Pavarotti and Vanessa Williams singing "Adeste Fideles" on *Saturday Night Live* (when did Vanessa get blonder than Shari Belafonte?) That got us back into the spirit of giving.

Fairy tales

As we nestled ourselves snug in our bed, visions of impeachment still dancing in our fey heads, we spied a few Christmas fairies whilst surfing the tube. One intriguing if completely anachronistic plot twist was on *That '70s Show*, which we had promised ourselves we



Lavender Tube

would never watch again; we've been driven to bad TV by those evil Washington humbugs. Fie!

Lo and behold, we saw a great light (well, a disco ball), and there it was: teenage boys kissing in a car (well, it was Fox). We haven't seen such tender chicken since our last trip to KFC. Eric makes a new pal, Buddy (Tommy from NBC's *3rd Rock from the Sun*), who, it develops, wants to be more than buddies. When Eric explains how he can't really be himself with his girlfriend, Buddy

leans over and kisses him.

The rest of the episode dealt with Eric's worries about whether such an event made him gay, if Buddy only came on to him because he thought Eric was gay and so forth. Typical teen stuff with a few twists, and nicely done. Eric's butch top girlfriend makes him worried about his level of machoness. (The Kinks' "Lola" could be his theme song.) What did seem very sit-com was the somewhat response of Eric's friends. This is supposed to be Wisconsin in the '70s, after all. Still, it's nice

ing show had Vanessa ask Virginia if she brought her turkey baster. NBC ran a crawl under the scene noting this was a *brand new* turkey baster, not the instrument of the crime. We had the same response we might have had were we offered a cigar at the White House. (Now we know why everyone sniffs them first.)

Memento mori

Finally, as this is the season of Auld Lang Syne, we would like to remember our dear friend, Michael Zaslow, who died De-

formances. Yet his most compelling role lay in how he battled ALS on and off screen.

Late in 1996, Procter & Gamble, producer of *GL*, forced Zaslow to take a leave of absence from his role as Thorpe when his normally distinctive voice began to be less clear. Then Zaslow was diagnosed with ALS and requested that P&G write his condition into his role. P&G refused, though *GL* created a similar storyline for a *GL* actress who wanted to take time off from her role. Zaslow's former soap, *OLTL*, offered to bring back his character and write his illness into the script. P&G refused to release Zaslow from his contract; he sued, won, and returned to *OLTL* — in a motorized wheelchair and using a Stephen Hawking-style voice computer. Even in his debilitated state and without his own marvelous voice, he could wow an audience with his superb skill.

In the world of soaps, life-threatening illness is mere plot device; miracle recoveries get scripted. Zaslow spent the last months of his life raising awareness about ALS, raising consciousness about disability, and proving, through his last day at work just weeks before his death, how extraordinary an actor and person he was. As the curtain falls on yet another year, we will miss Zaslow's ability to move us as an actor. We will miss his spirit more. ▼

Teenage boys kissing in a car: we haven't seen such tender chicken since our last trip to KFC.

to see boys kissing on primetime. Too bad the show's a dog.

Speaking of dogs, it's official: *Soap Opera Digest* nominated Dominique Jennings, Virginia (that's my turkey baster, bitch) of *Sunset Beach*, as best villainess. But the turkey-baster plot was also their pick for worst story of 1998. The "girls" of *SB* got the nod for dumbest soap characters. Now there's a tribute to strive for... to these girls, "substance" usually means collagen. Except when it means silicone.

We chuckled (or was it choked?) when *SB*'s Thanksgiving

6 at 54 after a valiant battle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). A New York stage actor and gifted pianist, Zaslow was best known to TV audiences for his Emmy-winning roles as Roger Thorpe on CBS's *Guiding Light* and David Renaldi on ABC's *One Life to Live*. Zaslow also appeared regularly on primetime shows like *Law & Order*. Zaslow was one of TV's most superb actors, which — in his case, at least — is not damning with faint praise. Few have breathed life into small-screen characters the way Zaslow did with his deeply nuanced per-

Journey through herstory

by Deborah Peifer

A *Fragile Union: New and Selected Writings* by Joan Nestle; Cleis Press, \$14.95

You may have a different reaction to Joan Nestle's newest book than I did if you weren't among the fortunate 500 who attended the sold-out tribute to Joan Nestle on November 6. During that splendid evening, lesbian luminaries such as Alison Bechdel, Dorothy Allison, Jewelle Gomez, and Katherine Forrest, among others, read from their favorites of the essays in Nestle's new book, shared per-

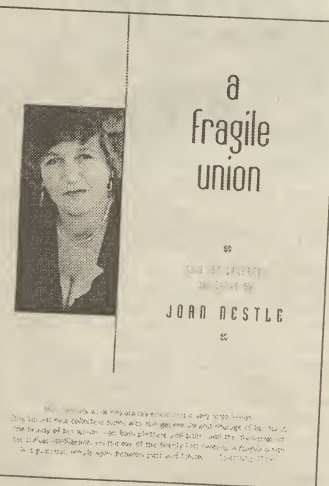
sonal reminiscences, and reminded us — lesbians, queers, humans — just how lucky we are to claim such a treasure as the extraordinary Joan Nestle. As co-founder of the Lesbian Herstory Archives, as observer and recorder of lesbian lives, Nestle serves as the memory of our peoples, sometimes as our conscience, often as our cheerleader, always as an honest witness to the ordinary and extraordinary moments of our history.

In her new book, *A Fragile Union*, Nestle gathers writings old and new that serve to document her own journey since the earliest days of her own lesbian story through her current struggle with

cancer. Despite living in homophobic times, Nestle never writes only of trauma. She insists: "You — my queer comrades — have given me a world where my words could live, where my love was kissed by sun, where my anger turned to visions of possibilities. These are hard times, but necessary ones. These are the times when we BE, a sturdy Yes of a people." ("Letter to My Community: A Sturdy Yes of a People")

Nestle's essays run emotionally from outraged to outrageous, with significant side-trips to the erotic and the delightful. In "The Will to Remember" Nestle chronicles the Lesbian Herstory Archives, and she considers the ways to think about that chronicle: "My journey with the Lesbian Herstory Archives can be told in two ways — the factual development of a vision into a building filled with artifacts of lesbian life, or the interior movement from my sense as a person deprived of historical memory to one glorying in the possibility of it. The journey from deprivation into plenitude is how I have put it on endless archives tours. It is also a journey from silence into speech, from shame into revelation."

Nestle has spent the last 25 years gathering the stories of the



lesbian nation, preserving them, sharing them, and always thinking and feeling what it means to be a lesbian in a queer-hating world. This means, of course, that when she was diagnosed with colon cancer, she didn't have the insurance or the finances to fight the disease. What she had, however, was the will. An advance from Cleis Press for *A Fragile Union* paid for a necessary second round of chemo. You can buy this book to help out a sister, and that would be a good thing, but you must buy this book because of the important, entertaining, sexy things Joan Nestle has to say to you. Oh yes, and she says all of those things with a prose that is as elegant as it is powerful. *A Fragile Union* is an extraordinary, unforgettable collection of essays, poems, and stories. Don't miss it. ▼

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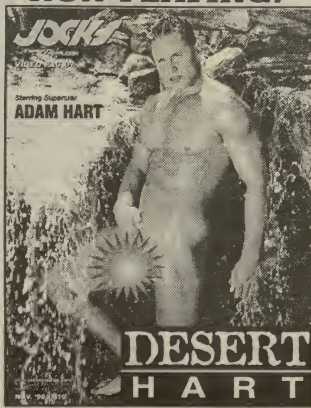
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BOOKS

Chanel No. 1

by Erin Blackwell

Chanel, Her Style and Her Life, by Janet Wallach; Nan A. Talese, Doubleday, \$35

It is impossible to overestimate the influence of Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel (1883-1971) on twentieth-century Western fashion. Things we take for granted—like costume jewelry, Chanel No. 5, the simple black dress, the Chanel suit, even the interlocking C's of her logo—represent a way of thinking (hers) that was as innovative in its time as it has proved enduring in its appeal.

Chanel: Her Style and Her Life by Janet Wallach is a photo album printed on heavy stock providing an overview of Chanel's incredible careers: artistic, social, and romantic. Wallach's prose is about what one would expect from the ex-fashion director of Garfinckel's in Washington, D.C., but that'll have to do for this picture-packed primer on the world's greatest couturière.

When Chanel was 12 years old, her mother died of tuberculosis. Abandoned by her traveling-salesman father, Gabrielle was placed in an orphanage; from there she went to a convent boarding school as a charity case. Then it was cabaret and the life of a courtesan, which might have been the end of it had she not started making hats. Exploiting her lovers' bank accounts and social contacts, Coco parlayed her personal appeal into a business launch.

During World War I, Chanel made her mark. The textile equivalent of her own slim, compact frame and dynamic personality, her clothes were just the refreshment the world was thirsting for. All her instincts were to simplify women's clothing in the interest of wearability and authority. The Jeanne d'Arc of couture, she redefined femininity as simplicity, strength, agility, and—when she introduced costume jewelry—even armor.

Amidst dozens of photos of Coco modeling her own clothes, period fashion illustrations, close-ups of her jewelry collections, candid shots of her entourage and the men in her life, readers are treated to a generalized description of life at its most luxurious. Not only were Chanel's friends wealthy or titled: the Duke of Westminster, the Prince of Wales, the Grand Duke Dimitri and his sister, the Grand Duchess Marie; they were brilliant: Cocteau, Diaghilev, Stravinsky and Picasso among them.

Chanel was clearly gifted from the start with enormous energy and a knack for looking after herself, but what explains the genius that catapulted her from rich man's plaything to empress of a fashion house still going strong 30 years after her death? If Janet Wallach knows the answer, she's not telling.

Coco collaborator

Wallach is also very sketchy, not to say apologist on Chanel's collaboration with the Nazi occu-

piers of her chosen city, Paris. Fellow couturiers Molyneux, Mainbocher, Schiaparelli, and Worth left the country. Coco not only stayed open for business, she took a German spy, Gunther von Dinklage, aka Spatz, for a love interest. She even tried to regain control of her fragrance No. 5 on the basis of her business partner's Jewishness. But as he'd left the country, that wise man had put his holdings in the care of someone with unobjectionable racial identity.

Apparently, when she realized which way the war was going to end, Chanel tried some half-baked *rapprochement* with former friend Winston Churchill, but Parisians were in no mood to forgive her betrayal. In 1954, at the age of 70, she finally got around to staging a comeback. Termed a *fiasco* in Paris, Chanel's renaissance was well-received on this side of the Atlantic. Several months later, she was already creeping back into the hearts and minds of the French, who could not resist her fashion sense, whatever her political stupidity.

The book's most evocative phrase appears on page 160, under a photo of the elderly Coco reclining on a couch with an ever-present cigarette in her hand and a hollowed-out look in her eyes: "Still afraid of solitude, she surrounded herself with females. She had switched her lovers, the fashion world believed, from men to women. Her young and beautiful models, some of them lesbians, all of them molded in her image, be-



Coco Chanel

came the objects of her affection." [Emphasis mine.]

As a reminder of what the world owes the feisty little French-

woman, *Chanel* is an imperfect homage. As a gift idea, it's an excellent fashion-consciousness raiser. ▼

Touched by an angel

by Deborah Peifer

Falling to Earth by Elizabeth Brownrigg; Firebrand, \$12.95

Angels are all the rage, don't you know, but for those of us who find atheism very satisfying, the whole angel thing is more than a little icky. Something about being watched by an unseen presence, whose job it is to report on your behavior to the big guy, or worse, to interfere with your behavior, gives me a serious case of the willies. As a consequence, it took me a while to pick up *Falling to Earth*, a book with angels all over it. My mistake, because Phoebe, the lead angel in Elizabeth Brownrigg's very fine first novel, is the kind of angel with whom I could really get into having a spiritual relationship.

Alice is our human hero, computer expert and closeted dyke by day, lesbian party-animal by night, who first saw Phoebe when she (Alice) was only a child. Convinced in the reality of her guardian angel, Alice grows up and forgets about her earlier faith until one odd day, when Phoebe reappears to the adult Alice, who is more than a little confused by the apparition. Phoebe, it turns out, is a little tired of her non-physical life and longs for a bit of materiality. Alice, on the other hand, is looking for meaning in her life and would dearly love to cut the (physical) cord. Both of them, woman and spirit, create



stories, which may or may not be fiction. But is Phoebe creating a story, or creating the real people who then live out her creation? And why is Alice able to float above the ground?

Brownrigg creates believable characters, and the interactions of her two heroes are funny and thought-provoking. She also raises serious questions about the presence or absence of the spiritual in our own lives. The angel's observations on the very human foibles of her mortal charge are astute, as are Alice's regarding the increasingly less angelic Phoebe. Brownrigg entertains, yes, but she also makes her reader think. I'm still imagining possibilities for both Phoebe and Alice, and wondering just what it might be like to have an angel like this in my life. ▼

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OUT & ABOUT

Calendare

by Mark Mardon

CHAKRA THE SEVEN CENTERS



सहसार चक्र

Bill Laswell's Chakra: The Seven Centers

DJ Solstice

For years after moving to San Francisco, I heard of the famous Winter Solstice Party thrown by the Radical Faeries, and like so many others I know, resisted going, fearing the party's over-the-top orgiastic revelries would overwhelm my delicate senses.

But, oh, I was so wrong. I can still recall that first time there, some years ago, when I finally got up the nerve to attend. Never before, except in my wildest imaginings, had I experienced anything remotely as sensuous, love-filled, brotherly, and unabashedly sexual. And a large part of what made it work was — and still is — the music. Not just the drumming and flute playing on the top floor, amid the pillows, psychedelic lamps, phallic art, food, and wafts of incense, though that was instrumental.

As much or more, it was the electronic trance music spun on the main floor — both for the dancers there and the men swarming in the basement — that swept me off my feet. And the person spinning that music, who has become my great friend and collaborator, is none other than the fabulous trance magician **DJ Logos**.

I was new to trance music then. I am no longer, thanks to Logos. For the last year or two, he and I have been co-deejays at a pirate radio station somewhere in the Bay Area (because of the oppressive FCC, I can't tell you exactly where; regrettably, you can't get the signal in San Francisco).

So at the Solstice Party last weekend, Dec. 19-20, Logos and I took turns spinning the whole night through. Our audience was the hundreds of exquisitely beautiful naked men of all ages and races who flowed through the space.

Many men came up to Logos and me to express their appreciation for what we were doing. They also wanted to know what that outrageously haunting, mesmerizing, intense music was we were playing.

I can't list everything here, but I can say that the big hit during my second (or was it third?) set was a series of tracks off a **Bill Laswell** album, *Chakra: The Seven Centers* (Meta Records). It features Laswell's superb sound score, and spoken word produced by Janet Rienstra, drawn from the text of *Kundalini's Tale*. The music and story struck a chord with many of the revelers, and I felt I had helped transport many a man's soul a bit closer to nirvana. ▼

Fri

The Jewish Museum

Two related events: "Alternative: The Other Side of Christmas," a multimedia exhibition exploring the experience of being an outsider on Christmas. Painting, sculpture, installation, and interactive video by 15 contemporary artists, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Curated by Deborah Gar Reichman. Also: "Being Jewish on Christmas," a day of celebration featuring live music, films, hands-on activities, and refreshments. Performers include the Jewish Folk Chorus, storyteller Ruth Halpern, California Klezmer, and Judy Frankel ("Songs of the Sephardim"). \$3 adults; \$1.50 students/seniors. 10am-4:30pm. The Jewish Museum San Francisco, 121 Stewart St. (btwn. Mission & Howard). 543-8880.

New Conservatory Theatre Center

"Beautiful Thing," a story of young love triumphant against all odds, set in south-east London in 1993. Written by Jonathan Harvey, directed by Ed Decker. With Jamie Marks and Nathan Wheeler as two teenage boys who risk everything for happiness. \$20. 8pm. Thru 1/2/1999. 25 Van Ness Ave. (near Market). 861-8972.

Lorraine Hansberry Theatre

"Christmas with the Crawfords," presented by Artfull Circle Theatre. A musical romp with Joan Crawford and her children. Starring Michael Cameron Benbrook as Joan Crawford. \$20. 8pm & 10pm. Thru 1/9/99. 620 Sutter St. Reservations: 621-5455.

Marines Memorial Theatre

"Christmas Cavalcade," a musical revue for the holidays. Blends classic favorites with comic rock and pop novelties. \$19-\$39. 8pm. Thru 12/27. 609 Sutter (at Mason). 771-6900.

New Asia Restaurant

Comedian Lisa Geduldig presents the 6th annual "Evening of Kung Pao Kosher Comedy," Jewish comedy at a Chinese restaurant. 772 Pacific. Reservations: 552-3737.

Sat

Josie's

"Varla and Her Only Friend," an evening of musical entertainment featuring drag chanteuse Varla Jean Merman and special guest Kristine Zbornik perform *Varla and Her Only Friend* at Josie's. See Saturday.

New Conservatory Theatre Center

Added performances: "Call Me Madam," starring Meg Mackay as Mrs. Sally Adams, the role originally made famous by Ethel Merman. Featuring the music of Irving Berlin in a 1950s satire of Washington politics. Presented by 42nd Street Moon. \$20 (\$16.50 seniors/students). 6pm (also 12/27 @ 2pm). 25 Van Ness Ave. (at Market). 861-8972.

King St. Garage

"Futura" dance club, with DJs Raymundo and Eric. \$10. 21+ w/D. 174 King St. 665-6715.

Luna Sea

"MoonSisters' Umoja Drum Fest," marking the first night of Kwanzaa. An evening for womyn, their families and friends. Bring drum, percussion instruments, and a potluck dish to share. \$10-\$20 (children free). 7pm-

Varla Jean Merman and special guest Kristine Zbornik perform *Varla and Her Only Friend* at Josie's. See Saturday.



The Marsh

"A Karen Carpenter Christmas," starring Katie Guthorn as Karen Carpenter and Morey Goldstein as her brother, Richard. Directed by Tom Ross. Featuring classics from the Carpenter canon, plus Christmas songs and Broadway show tunes. \$15-\$17. 7pm. 1062 Valencia St. 826-5750.

Syn

Theatre on the Square

Dame Edna Everage stars in "Dame Edna: The Royal Tour." Blessed at birth with natural wisteria hair, Dame Edna is, among many things, a housewife, megastar, investigative journalist, social anthropologist, chanteuse, swami, polymath, adviser to British royalty, grief counselor, spin doctor, and "arguably the most popular and gifted woman in the world today" (in her publicist's wildest dreams). \$25-\$40. Two shows: 3pm & 7pm.

Josie's

"Varla and Her Only Friend," featuring drag chanteuse Varla Jean Merman and special guest Kristine Zbornik. \$15. 8pm Josie's Cabaret and Juice Joint, 3583 16th St. Reservations: 861-7933.

Mon

Josie's

Comedian Suzy Berger hosts the last "Gay Comedy Open Mic," two hours of raw, up-and-coming comic talent. \$10. 8pm. Josie's Juice Joint and Cabaret, 3583 16th St. (at Market). To sign up, or for reservations, call 861-7933.

The Marsh

"A Karen Carpenter Christmas," starring Katie Guthorn as Karen Carpenter and Morey Goldstein as her brother, Richard. \$15-\$17. 8:30pm & 10:30pm. Thru 12/30. 1062 Valencia St. 826-5750.

Tue

ACT

Spalding Gray (*Swimming to Cambodia*), one of the theater's most acclaimed storytellers, returns to the Bay Area when American Conservatory Theater presents a sneak preview of his new monologue, *Morning, Noon, and Night*. A special non-subscription engagement. The story chronicles some of the events in a day in the life of Spalding and his family, who live in a small town in eastern Long Island. \$15-\$40. 8pm (Sun. 2pm). Thru 1/3/99. Geary Theater, 415 Geary St. Tix: Geary Theater Box Office, 405 Geary St. (at Mason); all BASS ticket outlets; or by phone at 749-2228.

The Stud

"Trannyshack," hosted by Hekline. \$4 cover. Doors open 10pm; show at midnight. 21+ w/D. The Stud Bar, corner of Ninth St. & Harrison.

Josie's

"Varla and Her Only Friend," featuring drag chanteuse Varla Jean Merman and special guest Kristine Zbornik. \$15. 8pm Josie's Cabaret and Juice Joint, 3583 16th St. Reservations: 861-7933.

Wed

The Plush Room

Extended engagement: Wesla Whitfield performs "This Can't Be Love," with the lyrics of Lorenz Hart and the music of Richard Rogers. With Mike Greensill on piano, Ken Miller on Bass. \$20 (Wed., Thu., Sun.; \$25 Fri. & Sat.). Thru 1/16/99. York Hotel, 940 Sutter St. 885-2800.

Josie's

"Varla and Her Only Friend," featuring drag chanteuse Varla Jean Merman and special guest Kristine Zbornik. \$15. 8pm Josie's Cabaret and Juice Joint, 3583 16th St. Reservations: 861-7933.

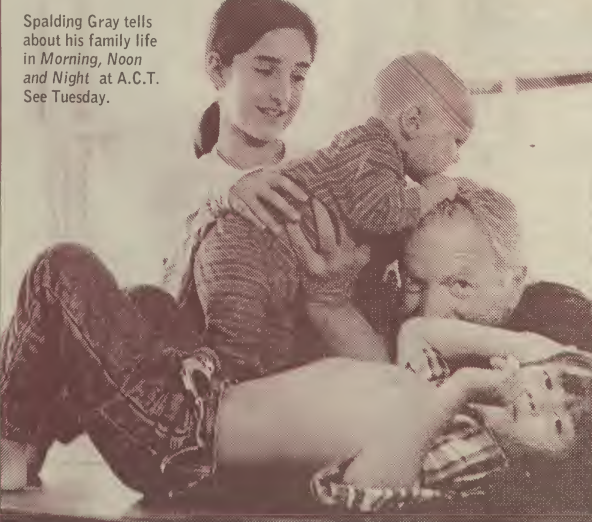
Thu

Asian Art Museum

14th annual Japanese New Year's Bell Ringing. Following Japanese custom, each year should end with the dying reverberations of a temple bell that has been struck 108 times. According to Buddhist belief, this number corresponds to the 108 mortal desires that plague mankind. The tolling of the bell dispels these desires so that one may be freed from their temptation during the coming year. Free with museum admission (\$7). 11am. Gruhn Court. 379-8879.

Josie's

"Varla and Her Only Friend," an evening of musical entertainment featuring drag chanteuse Varla Jean Merman and special guest Kristine Zbornik from New York's



Spalding Gray tells about his family life in *Morning, Noon and Night* at A.C.T. See Tuesday.

Nath L. Greenberg



Those wild and crazy dancers and performers at AWD present *AWD in Space*, a New Year's performance bash at the Oakland Warehouse Space. See Thursday.

"Forbidden Broadway." \$25 (\$46 for dinner and show). Two shows: 8pm & 10pm. Josie's Cabaret and Juice Joint, 3583 16th St. 861-7933.

The Endup

New Year's Eve Bash at "The Girl Spot," co-sponsored by Mariah T Presents and Alize. Includes party favors, complimentary photo, go go dancers, a midnight buffet and Alize Cocktail for all, the hot sounds of DJ Jorje, and free admission to the Girl Spot's "Hello 1999" party. \$20 advance; \$25 door. Doors open 8pm.

El Rio

"Braziliana," a gay and lesbian Brazilian New Year's Eve party. DJ Clay of Club Bahia spins samba, lambada, and candomblé. Go go boys and girls. Finger food and Caipirinhas. \$10. 9pm-2am. 3158 Mission St. 1-800-332-8802.

550 Barneveld St.

Gus presents "Metropolis" San Francisco New Year's Eve 1999. Erin Hamilton performs live on stage. Fea-

turing DJs Paul Goodyear and Phil B. \$45 advance; \$50 door. 8pm-5am (followed by "Aftershock"). Located off Bayshore Blvd. between Oakland and Industrial streets. Follow the searchlights. 646-0890.

Club Townsend

New Year's Eve Party with CeCe Peniston and Lynette Hawkins Stephens, with a laser show at midnight. \$25 advance; \$30 door. 21+ w/D. 177 Townsend St. 289-6650.

Oakland Warehouse Space

"AWD in Space," a New Year's performance bash "celebrating one more year until everything goes to complete hell." Presented by that brash group of San Francisco dancers and performers known for their intense physicality, freaky costumes, drumming, vocalizing, and audience interaction. DJ dancing, fire spinning, and guest artists (including Channel 23 and Exploding Puppet Theatre). 2870 Chapman Street, Oakland. For tickets & info call the AWD Studio (415) 777-2AWD or the Oakland

Warehouse Space at (510) 534-5551.

Luna Sea

Vixen Creations presents "Quiver: In Bed with Fairy Butch for Gals," a New Year's Extravaganza for women and their friends. Featuring all-girl strippers, go-go dancers, the Amazing Allegra Bandy, DJ Olga T, dancing and more. \$12-\$15 sliding. 10pm-3am. 2940 16th St. 863-2989.

The Casting Couch

"Purple New Year's Eve" party with hors d'oeuvres and a champagne toast. Purple attire encouraged. \$15 advance; \$19.99 door. 9pm-4am. 950 Battery St. (btwn. Green and Vallejo). Tix: (510) 601-TWEB. Info: 986-7001 or email edgar@thecastingcouch.com.

Maritime Hall

"Psychedelic Ball" presented by 2B1 Productions and the Cannabis Action Network. Featuring Toots and the Maytals, Merl Saunders & the Rainforest Band, Jai Uttal, Nick Gravanites, and the Ali Khan Band. \$45 advance;

\$50 door. 450 Harrison (at 1st). Info: 974-0634.

Henry J. Kaiser Auditorium, Oakland

Sold out (but worth trying to get into): "A Cryptical Development," a Greatful Dead-style New Year's party. Featuring Mickey Hart's Planet Drum, String Cheese Incident, KVHW, Ratdog, Hot Tuna, and an all-star jam. \$50 (if you can find someone with spare tix). 7pm-4am. 10 Tenth St., Oakland.

International Ballroom

The Anon Salon Soirée of Sensual Sorcery presents "New Year's EVEolution." Featuring live trance music by Lost At Last (recently found at Burning Man), Sirens of the Can-Can, Mystic Midway performers, a Paradisiac Procession, Tantric dancers, DJ Laird and guest DJs from the PsychoFunkaDiscoDeliC Crew, a Swim in the Nude Year in the pool (bring a towel), bathing in the spirITUAL Pool, a floating Lotus Water Goddess performance, altars, lingerie show, a Crescendo countdown with flower petals dropped from overhead at midnight, and much more. \$20 in advance from TicketWeb; \$30 at the door. 8pm on. 50 Oak St. (near Van Ness & Market) Info: 978-2345

Cat Club

New Wave City and Club 1984 present "New Wave Eve," dancing to New Wave music of the late '70s and early '80s. Party favors, door prizes, midnight champagne toast, and balloon drop. Featuring DJs Shindog and Skip of New Wave City, and DJs Brian Raffi and Matt of Club 1984. \$15 door; \$12 advance; \$35 advance couples package (includes 2 admissions, bottle of champagne, front-of-line admission, party favors). 21+ w/D. 11190 Folsom St. (near 8th). 675-LOVE.

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Out & About
Bay Area Reporter
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San Francisco, CA
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Christmas Cavalcade, a musical revue for the holidays, plays at Marines Memorial Theatre. See Friday.

42nd St. Moon presents a staged concert of

Meg Mackay in

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Starring
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The days dwindle down

by Mister Marcus

The Yuletide season is upon us, and parties continue unabated as bar, bike club, employee and private gatherings celebrate the season. And it's not over yet.

At the Powerhouse last Sunday night, December 14, the fabulous Christmas tree created by calendar man Glennon Sutter went for well over \$1,000. When Lenny Broberg finished auctioning off all the donated items, some \$2,500 was raised for the AIDS Emergency Fund.

The weekend before, AIDS Benefits Counselors reaped over \$6,000 by way of the Omar Moseley/Don Ho party and Gary Virginia's Leather Holiday Brunch at Harvey's.

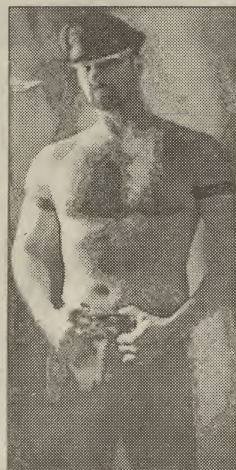
And of course no holiday party is complete without bare chested men. Fortunately, the 1999 Bare Chest Calendar men have been on an accelerated campaign to market their calendars, and appeared at almost a dozen venues to autograph and sell them, including on the street in the Disastro (each Saturday).

Certainly the fund-raising aspect of Yule celebrations is not exclusive to San Francisco alone. In New Hope, Pennsylvania, the Bucks MC staged their annual Christmas extravaganza, and raised thousands for charities in the area; in Washington, D.C., the DC-Eagle hosted a huge fund-raiser as well.

The leather communities of this country are quite possibly the most generous of all the sub-cultures in the greater LGBT community. That's most fitting at this time of the year, when those less fortunate are remembered with toys, foodstuffs and cash to finance various programs. Hats off to all of you who have given so graciously of your cash and, more importantly, your time as volunteers. No effort can succeed without willing, dedicated and altruistic volunteers, and we are fortunate that these people care — really care.

Bare chests 2000

The board of directors of SM-MILE last week announced the



Kevin Cost is Mr. Pittsburgh Leatherman 1998, and will compete for Mr. Mid-Atlantic Leather in Washington, DC next month.

dates for the millennial *Bare Chest Calendar 2000*. If you are thinking of competing to be featured in its pages, here are the dates of each contest (all on Thursdays at the Powerhouse Bar): Mr. January (Jan. 7); Mr. February (Jan. 21); Mr. March (Feb. 4); Mr. April (Feb. 18); Mr. May (March 4); Mr. June (Mar. 18); Mr. July (Mar. 25); Mr. August (Apr. 1); Mr. September (Apr. 15); Mr. October (Apr. 29); Mr. November (May 6); and Mr. December (May 20).

After all 12 winners are chosen, they will compete for the cover of the 2000 calendar, and that competition takes place on Thursday, June 3. Production begins immediately after that, and SMMILE hopes to have it on sale no later than the Dore Alley Street Fair (July 25). Aspirants should be reminded that being on the calendar is more than a glamorous task. The judges will be looking for men who will push sales and press the flesh at all the in- and out-of-town appearances required. This is viewed as a painless way to contribute to the good of the community. The proceeds from the calendar will go to

the AIDS Emergency Fund and one other agency next year. And thanks to the generosity of Miller Brewing Co., the production much easier than it has been in the past.

The rush is on, too, by people wanting to judge these 12 contests, including out of towners. Former Ms. SF Leather Queen Cougar is flying in to judge the Mr. January 2000 contest. Other out-of-town people will judge some of the subsequent contests. So if you're thinking of trying for a spot, now's the time to start pumping up and getting ready for the competition. Everyone wants to be on this one!

Post-holiday play

The leather community is gearing up for the first major leather event of 1999, the Cenatur MC's Mid-Atlantic Leather weekend in Washington, DC the weekend of January 15-18. Headquarters for the event is the Washington Plaza Hotel on Thomas Circle, and my spies say it's sold out already. There will be more than 50 vendor booths in the hotel, and the \$69 weekend package for all the events is nearly sold out. But rush now and you might still get in. You can charge to your MasterCard, Visa, AmEx or Discover cards by calling 800-494-TIXS. Tickets for the contest alone on Sunday afternoon are \$25. As an added attraction, the Men of Discipline will be celebrating their 4th anniversary at the DC Eagle on Saturday night, January 16, so it should be very festive!

Tony Mills, who won the title last year and went on to win the Int'l. Mr. Leather title in May, heads the list of judges which this time around includes IMsL Megan DeJarlais, Int'l. Mr. Leather 92 Lenny Broberg, Joseph Bean, JoAnne Gaddy, Jim Bennett and Wayne Nesbitt, Mr. DC Eagle 1998. If you've never been to Mid-Atlantic Leather weekend, you don't know what you're missing!

The same weekend in Portland, Oregon, uniform mavens can cavort around town during the Portland Uniform Weekend VII, January 16-18, sponsored by *In Uniform* Magazine and the American Uniform Association. The line-up of events includes two fancy dinners, a Clippers party, special bar nights, buffet

next page ►



Mr. DC-Eagle winners (L. to R.) David Bernard, 2nd runner-up; Glen Mlaker, Mr. DC Eagle 1998-99; and Brian Middleton, 1st runner-up, chosen at that bar Thanksgiving weekend.

MUSIC

Veering from the map

by Gregg Shapiro

Jonatha Brooke fans can be broken down into two groups: those who learned of her when she was one half of the Story (with Jennifer Kimball), and those who discovered her as a solo artist. Those of us who were aware of Brooke and Kimball were more than a little surprised when Brooke's 1995 disc *Plumb* was released under the moniker Jonatha Brooke and the Story, with no Jennifer Kimball to be found. Her 1997 disc *10 Cent Wings* was released as a Brooke album, and there was still no sign of Kimball.

Have no fear, Jennifer Kimball has surfaced, and she sounds terrific on her first solo disc, *Veering From The Wave* (Imaginary Road). While most of the songwriting credit on the Story discs went to Brooke, Kimball wrote ten (or eleven) of *Wave's* twelve tracks. Many of the songs will delight fans of the Story, as they have a quality about them that is reminiscent of the duo's best work. Tracks such as "Meet Me In The Twilight," "Kissing In The Car," "It's A Long Way Home," "Take One Step," and "World Without End" prove Kimball to be a songwriter every bit as nimble as her former Story-mate Brooke. Finally, as if the aforemen-

tioned songs aren't enough to get your interest, Kimball covers Neil Finn's "Fall At Your Feet," and gives every indication that Shawn Colvin isn't the only singer/songwriter with a Crowded House jones. This is a story with a happy ending.

Speaking of Shawn Colvin and Jonatha Brooke, you can hear some of Colvin's influence in Dee Carstensen's vocals, and Brooke's back-up vocals can be heard on a

(on which the amazing Holly Palmer also contributes back-up vocals), "Pandora's Box," "The Boy Was Trouble," "By The Wayside," and the stunning "The Last Time It Mattered" and "Farewell, My Love." Like Kimball, Carstensen has exquisite taste in cover tunes, and her version of Elton John and Bernie Taupin's "Come Down In Time" almost made me forget Lani Hall's for a moment.

Kimball gives every indication that Shawn Colvin isn't the only singer/songwriter with a Crowded House jones.

few tracks on Carstensen's wonderful debut disc *The Map* (Exit Nine/Blue Thumb). Interestingly enough, Carstensen also works with some of the same musicians (Marc Shulman and Zev Katz) that Kimball did on her album. Influences and comparisons aside, Dee Carstensen is her own performer, and the point is driven home with her choice of musical instrument. Carstensen plays the harp! She also plays piano and organ. Highlights of *The Map* include the title track, "Be My Man"

Donna Lewis, who made quite a splash a few years ago with her single "I Love You Always Forever," is back with *Blue Planet* (Atlantic). Equally as electronic as her previous album, *Blue Planet* is actually more enjoyable. Most of the songs won't propel you out of a sitting position, but neither will they have you sitting still. I liked "I Could Be The One," "Love Him," "Falling," and "Lay Me Down," the best. The question of who Rita is (in the song "I Could Be The One") is begging to be asked and answered. ▼

Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

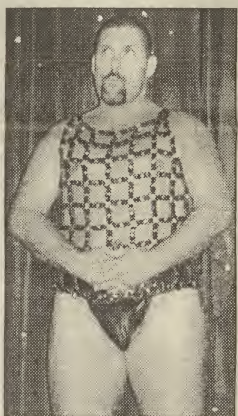
brunches, a tour of historic Air Park and a Military Collector's Show. The complete schedule and info package are available by calling Andy Mangels at (503) 228-6935 between 1100 and 2000, or email: UniformMag@aol.com, or check out the website at www.teleport.com/~uniform.

The following weekend Mr. and Ms. Santa Clara Co. Leather weekend takes place in the South Bay. The theme this year is "Clash of the Leather Titans." You can check out the details on their website:

<http://members.aol.com/sc-leather/>. Briefly, Friday you are invited to attend a party as your favorite ancient deity; workshops and leather market at a leather community fair on Saturday afternoon, and that night the Mr. and Ms Santa Clara Co. will be chosen, with a nectar and ambrosia victory brunch the next day. Make your plans now!

Dances with dish

The Phoenix Uniform Club staged its annual Christmas party



Gregg Adams of Tampa was chosen Mr. Florida Leather at the Parliament House in Orlando on Sat., Dec. 13, and competes for IML in May.

last Saturday night, and it was one of those hoot-and-holler fun times that only that club can produce. While the beverages and dinner were their usual elite rendering, the white-elephant gift ex-

change is always the highlight of the annual gathering. When you open your gift, the next person can take it from you if they choose, so that infamous blue dress (sans stains a la Monica Lewinsky) re-surfaced again this year, as well as a tacky wig. The main gift that was confiscated over and over was a ceramic black boot with a Harley-Davidson logo, but I don't know who eventually wound up with it. Hilarious fun night!

On Sunday, the Golden Gate Guards held their gathering and the usual high-class food and beverages highlighted the gathering at A.L. Allen's digs. Yes, all is well in our club circles and everyone looks forward to another rewarding year. Hey, all of you out there, have a Cool Yule and a Frantic First!

Oops!

If you read the list of judges for Mr. San Francisco Leather 1999 which I announced last week, please know that one name was left off the roster and that would be the current Mr. SF Leather Daddy, Kelly Showers. Sorry about that Kelly. Didn't mean to inject any trauma into your life! ▼

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EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Thursday, December 24

Hey, it's Christmas Eve! Clients and friends of the AIDS Emergency Fund can enjoy a sumptuous dinner in the Green Room of the War Memorial Bldg. (401 Van Ness Ave.) with three seatings: Noon, 1330, and the last one at 1500, thanks to all the donors and volunteers!

Saturday, December 26

The 15 Association's last play party of the year is tonight from 2100 to 0200 in the morning. Doors open from 2100 to 2300 only. BYOB. Call 673-0452 for invite & location. Your guest must arrive with you!

Friday, January 1

Jito Presents stages the Aftershock party beginning at 0400 in the morning and going until 1600. It's a 12-hour dance-a-thon at 715 Harrison, with tickets \$30/advance, \$40/door. All the other dance clubs

will be going full blast all night too!

Sunday, January 3

The last six 1999 bare chest calendar guys will be auctioned off for dinner dates (and other raffle prizes) at the Eagle beer/soda bust from 1500-1800. Lenny Broberg will be the auctioneer, and all to benefit the AEF.

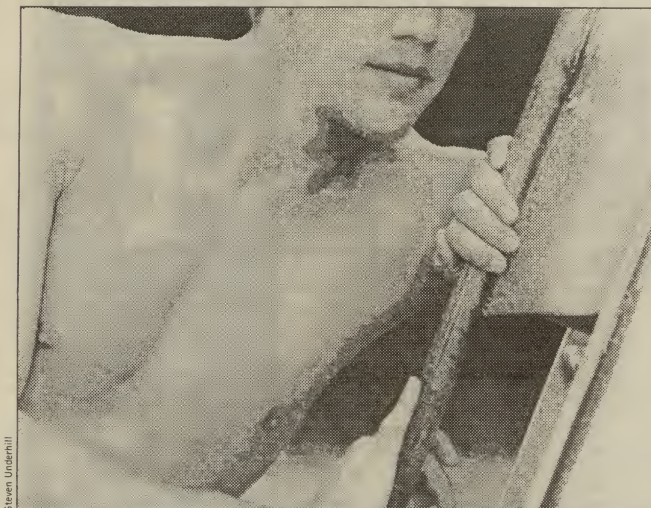
Thursday, January 7

Mr January 2000 will be chosen at the Powerhouse for the bare chest calendar. Want to do you share to benefit others less fortunate? Win \$ and instant celebrity status. Contest at 2200. Fun. Laughs. Shenanigans!

Weekend January 15-18

Centaur MC of Washington, DC state the Mr. Mid Atlantic Leather weekend and selection of their icon for 1999. Tony Mills passes the sash to a worthy contender. Have you made your plans yet?

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PARTING GLANCES

PowerHouse Hunk

10/24 You: Exceptionally handsome man with plaid shirt open to show your beautiful hairy chest. Hearing Aides? Near patio door some guy sucked your nipples. After, I whispered "Wish I'd done that." Please call. 5100

Jeep Cherokee Th 11/12

12:45pm Me: wild hair Jetsons Honda E.V. You: goatee, shades, nice smile, followed me Market over Portola. We waved, you turned left. Wanna ride? 5101

Where Is Fairfield? Where R U

12/10 Me: invalid? I live close to you. Would like to meet. Me: 3yrs, 5'11", 145, br/bl. 5102

Jay The Fireman-Castro 10/31

Peter in Blk/wht came would like to be trapped in your suspenders again. Looked for you in the crowd with no luck. We had great hugs. 5103

Raoul Please Call Again!!!

I responded to your ad, you called me fri, the 13, but my machine cut off before I got your #! 5104

Pacific Heights Thur 11/12 3:30

We saw each other @ doctors office, then followed each other all over fillmore st, why didn't you follow me into Alta Plaza to join me for a drink? 5105

Streetlight Records Sat 11/7

You: Dark and handsome in dark jacket and khakis. Me: Plaid jacket, jeans; hat. I've regretted not talking, 2nd chance? 5106

Joe Seeks Jeff

We met at Wom Out West, 5107

Seamus, it's Been Awhile...

Come by for a visit-- and bring your human with you too! Marty. 5108

Blue Suit/Blk Hair & Sexy!!!!!!

11/9 4pm. You: Blue suit/Blk hair, sexy! Me: Brown hair/round glasses. We both got off Muni @ Church st., saw you again 11/21 3pm. Walked your way to Page/Steiner. Would like very much to meet you!! 5109

Tues 11/17 Midnight Sun

You were in the back with a friend, blonde, goatee & eyes that made me melt. You told me I had a beautiful smile as you left. Please call. 51200

Neil Friday Night 10/30/98

You touched me in such an incredible sensual way, with passionate rhythm felt by few. Too good to let slip away... When I see you again, we will smile. Troy. 51201

Cute Redhead Tower Records

Mon, 11/23. You: cute red head with short bearded friend. Me: blue cap and eyes, dark beard. I stared, you stared. Wish we exchanged numbers or did more. Please call. 51202

7/21-7/11 18th & Nee

Said Hi at 7-11, around 1:30, you went down Nee. toward market, I went up hill, turned around exchanged glances. Couldn't stop then. Want to meet? 51203

Gold's Gym Monday 11/16

Afternoon. Matching tattered blue towels; steam, sauna. Wanted to give you my armpit a chance to talk with you again. Rob. 51204

Big Game Berkeley to SF Bart

You: CAL cap Khaki's, sweater, boots. Me: Black jacket sitting @ map. You squating @ door. Exposed your Calvin Kleins-then got off Ashby. Please call David. Make me smile. 51246

22 Fillmore @ Oak 9am Tues

You: tuning! Dark hair, eyes, Walkman. Me: Light br/hair, blue-green eyes. Hea ry eye contact, but too shy to speak. Call me so we can connect! 51200

Sweet Inspirations on Market

Sun 11/29/98 3pm. Me: white jacket talking with friend. You: handsome blond, great smile. We left, but I returned to see you. You were gone. Coffee together? Please call. 51202

Sun 11/29 J Church to Powell

U: Gd/king, great smile, stache/g-p, in all black, talking w/female fmd in shiny blk jacket. Me: short drk, hair, stache/g-p, blk denim jacket. We smiled. Wish I'd said hi. Call me. Let's talk. 51203

Opera - Norma 11/28 - 12:45pm

Exchanged glasses outside & inside, while you were in ticket line. Both dressed in blue. Me: 5'9", glasses. You: taller, dark blond. Let's talk. 51204

Man With Yam Seeks Pineapple

Laurel Village Cal Mart, 51205

Cute Asian Boy At Buddies

Met you twice at Buddies. Got you off four times. Last time was on a Fri. Me: tall Asian with 3 peeds baseball cap. Too shy to talk after. Call me? 51206

N Judd Train Nov.18 9-9:30pm

You: Black Male-French coat. Me: White male. Pea coat standing w/friend. Included you in conversation about reading people. Got off @ Duboce. Would like to see you again. 51207

SPCA Adoption Ctr Sun Nov29

You: Red(?) running shorts (great legs!), short blondish hair, mid-30s (?), wandering around. Me: sort, goatee, in shorts. L 51208

PASQUA 12/6 @ 8:00pm

I smiled @ U from across the room... 51209

Tues 11/17 Midnight Sun

You were in the back with a friend, blonde, goatee & eyes that made me melt. You told me I had a beautiful smile as you left. Please call. 51200

Neil Friday Night 10/30/98

You touched me in such an incredible sensual way, with passionate rhythm felt by few. Too good to let slip away... When I see you again, we will smile. Troy. 51201

Cute Redhead Tower Records

Mon, 11/23. You: cute red head with short bearded friend. Me: blue cap and eyes, dark beard. I stared, you stared. Wish we exchanged numbers or did more. Please call. 51202

7/21-7/11 18th & Nee

Said Hi at 7-11, around 1:30, you went down Nee. toward market, I went up hill, turned around exchanged glances. Couldn't stop then. Want to meet? 51203

Sat 12/5 You Catered A Small

Party in the Oakland hills. Me: shaved head, goatee. Wanted to give you my armpit a chance to talk with you again. Rob. 51204

Roger? 201 Mission 13th fr

You: Dark good looks, front row. Me: GWM, IL brown/green eyes. Eyes met in bar when friend went to drink. You said hi. Not for long. Lunch on 28th fri. If possible call me so we can connect! 51200

You're Absolutely Gorgeous!!!!

That's what I told you as I left "The Cafe" on sat 12/5. Wish I'd asked for your #. You take my breath away! Can we meet? 51202

Dame Edna Wed 12/2 Intermission

You: Dark good looks, front row. Me: GWM, IL brown/green eyes. Eyes met in bar when friend went to drink. You said hi. Not for long. Lunch on 28th fri. If possible call me so we can connect! 51200

#42 Thurs 12/10 10am

You sat next to me on Bay. You got my attention. I got off off Clay. Would like to meet you. 51204

Cost Plus, Eve of Nov 18

You: exy silver fox, baseball cap brown leather jacket, black spandex shorts, brown sandals; left in gold Lincoln. Me: tall, brown hair/goatee, Khaki pants/shirt. Let's meet. Please call. 51205

Russell Duhaime!!!!

You are wonderful!!! You, too, have beautiful eyes! I'm yours, call me! 51203

12/4 Will- Grand Hyatt

I picked you up and gave you a ride home. My phone rang and interrupted us. My situation has changed. Give me a call! 51206

Club Universe 12/12

You: silver shirt, long zipper. Me: baseball cap, nippie rings. Wanted to talk but had to go. Please call. You're adorable. 51207

Mark

We met Wednesday 12/9. Your # went through the wall. Please leave it at this mailbox. Tony. 51208

SEEKING RELATIONSHIP

Sexbuddy Wanted

GWM, 33, seeks same, 20s-30s, for playful sex and friendship. Me: exy, brn, brn, submissive, slightly kinky. Into film, books, cycling, inebriated. Pale, pierced, skinny boys especially welcomed. N please. 51244

Good Looking Boy Next Door

Masculine, yno, 30s, regular guy. Br/hr, 165#, 5'8", HIV-, seeking dark haired older brother type. 31-41, 5'10". Must be masculine, nice guy, good shape, attractive, top. 51110

Older for Young Ltn Blk Asian

Attractive 54yo GWM, 6', 187lbs, fit, masc., goatee, blue eyes, playful, versatile, seeks dark fit younger top who is down to earth, playful and uninhibited for LTR in 51205

Pussy Boy Punk Masochist

21-32, with decent body, in to verbal abuse, bondage, control, humiliation, sought by GWM 54, 5'7", 145lbs, NS, HIV-, masculine top. 51112

HIV+ 5'9" 165# Blk

Looking for friendship anything else would be icing on the cake! I am a down to earth Taurus with a fairly wide range of interests. Capricorn, Virgo, Cancer, A++ 51113

Yng Punk/Alternative Boy

Sought by Yuppie 40yo GWM. Looking for someone who likes to party have fun and have sex. But who is not into drugs or drinking. Pass LTR. 51114

Latin Seeks Friends Or?

I'm 27, 5'7", 160lbs, muscular, stocky, attractive, busy student. I'm seeking whites or latins over 21 for friendship or poss LTR. 51115

Emotional Intelligence

Late 20s GWM seeks masculine, tall GWM, for an authentic life together. Enjoy projects, home cookin', kinky sex. I'm handsome, outspoken and have an edge - Don't be squeamish!!! 51116

ISO Masculine Awake Short

Grounded, spirited, intense, sensual, 5' WM (5'6", muscular, lean 40s) seeks youthful man committed to physical fitness and inner world mindfulness, awakened oriented A guy who's responsible but still knows how to have fun. 51117

Mature Black Men

GWM, 45, loves to service older black men 40-60, for steady relationship. Don't be lonely and horny anymore. You won't be disappointed. Love. 51118

Young Los Gatos Guy

You lived on Montecito C196-97. We met at Renegades, had breakfast at Iron 51119

Handsome Muscular Italian

GWM, 38, 6'2", 185lbs, into fitness, travel, romance & quiet times, seeks another HIV-NEGATIVE, extremely well-hung man for monogamous relationship. 51120

Seeking Meaningful Sex

With a handsome younger sexual romantic 18-40yo man who enjoys making love with an attr. mature GWM, 75, 5'9", 165, 51121

HIV+ an Affair to Remember

43, HIV+, 6'2", brn/gym, 190, 6' cut, hairy bottom, moustache, total bottom: 165, 51122

GWM Top HIV- 44 ISO Tall Men

Good looking bald professional 6'5" 215#, well hung thick ISO men 5'11" + 5'9" +, financially stable, into fine arts, music, esp. ballet. Love to cook, read, swim, 49ers, 51123

Seeking Love

Young and mature GLM seeks 19-30yo, emotionally stable GWM/GLM for relationship. Caring, affectionate, sincere, into music, music, working out, movies and the simple things. A sense of humor is a must. N/S. 51124

Obedient Quiet Hole

I see boy dick, pretty hole needs partner for serious long term ownership. train and cultivate to your specifications. help-less, raw, exhausted, pleading, honored. Contract? Collateral? Recompensations? Vitamins administered at your whim. 51125

HIV+ Top Wanted

32, 5'10", 150lbs, Asian seeks a sincere HIV+ who is masculine, professional, relationship minded and physically fit. 51126

Native American Sought

GM, 30, 5'7", 135-40 searching for Native American gay male 25-45, for long term relationship. I enjoy outdoors, biking, exercise, having a good time. Please respond. 51127

Looking for Older HIV+ BM

GWM bottom, 54, 5'10" 210lbs, HIV+, looking for HIV+ BM to explore the possibilities of a relationship. Interested in consens, dining out, plays, travel. I live in Oakland. 51205

Mexican Milk

Bi WM, 48, clean, discreet, oral wants Mexican friends in F. No drugs, no no reciprocation. My place or ? 51206

Bottom Looking for Top Boyfriend

GWM, 28, 5'8", 165, looking for LTR. We are both physically fit, masculine and HIV- NS. Take a chance. 51207

GWM 46 5'8" 190# Seeks GWM

Under 40 for LTR. I have thin lite brown hair w/gray. I am 30-40' overwt. Tired of just sex. Want sex and love. 51208

Daddy's Little Freak

GWM 28yo, 5'11", 180#, lean, tight body, tattooed, pierced, flat top, great ass, bondage whore. ISO 30-40 who is aggressive, attractive, loads of fun, & a freak like me. 51209

Butch Bumping Bottom

GWM 48, HIV+, 5'8", 140#, 8' cut, tight and muscular, hairy ass, with equally hungry mouth, looking for hot butch top interested in starting a romantic sensual relationship! 51210

Asian Wanted

GWM, 52, 5'8", 175, brn/bl, beard, HIV-, seeks relationship with warm, loving, and lusty Asian GM. 51212

Masochist Seeks Asian/Pacific

GWM, 52, 5'8", 175, 160#, blonde, muscular, spiritual, unconventional, professional, loyal, submissive at play. Are you: sincere, herb/aroma tolerant, relationship-oriented, under 40? 51213

Rubber Boy ISO Leather Man

GWM, 58', 145#, 38, cut, centered, athletic, educated, groomed, for handsome GWM/Daddy/master butch/boy into sex, motex, art. 51214

Inexperienced Musc Blond Bottom

43 good looking have smooth speedo tan line, great ass, seeks romantic, fit, down to earth, musc guy with creative fingers. Would like to break me in slowly and regularly. 51215

Financially Secure Male Wanted

8y me. I'm educated, good looking, creative, intelligent. 51216

Wanted: A Happier New Year!

HIV+, 35, 160, Handsome, natural blond, blue eyes, seeks caring, sexy, GWM/H for LTR. Let's stop playing games and start living! Darker hair preferred - not required. Romance and sincerity are! 51209

Younger Guy & Lovemate

Searching for dependable, honest, cute boy who's slender, trim, affable, educated, oral & caucasian. Me: 40yo doctor in Marin, 5'6", slender, oral. No contractible diseases a must! 51210

Seeking Asian

Attractive prof male 24-38 by attractive 27yo GWM. Gym regular likes music, movies, gym. Wants LTR with committed oriented A guy who's responsible but still knows how to have fun. 51211

Can It Be Possible That There

Are no uncult. 35-55yo men out there looking for a LTR? Dating them!?? GWM 45 blu/bn, cowboy, 5'8", F, butch, cut 8' plus. Hones, sincere. 51212

I love Muscular Nice Guys

Hot in-shape GWM, 34, 5'9", 140lbs, br/gm, seeks hot, very muscular man, any race. I'm fun, safe, HIV-, you be too. Pls. 51213

Romantic prof GWM seeks Dating

GAM/GWM, 25-35yrs to share movies, arts, dining, each other in F. Possible LTR. I am a handsome 5'6", 135lb, brn/blu, HIV-, versatile, 46yrs. 51214

Passion & Adventure

Only the creative live life! 30s blue eyed blond European seeks Frenchman, European or Latin 20s-40s. 51215

Elements Of Desire

GWM HIV+ 47yo 5'10" bottom ISO, 18-30yo into toys, music, video. Any race, East Bay, slender A+. 51215

Free Massage

GWM, Ex-Massage therapist, 6', 165lbs, 40, Ger/Ital, br/hzl offers free massage to learn, wiry, dark haired caucasian tops. Let me rub you the right way. 51216

Holiday Shopping Break

Need a break from all that shopping? Live near down would like to give Holiday lift. I am handsome 5'8", tall/pepper, small, tache, av. You are tall & good looking top. 51217

SF To South Bay

GWM, 63, 5'9", 140, HIV-, ISO older gay Asian or White guy. Friendship, movies, dinners, sex. Let's talk. 51218

Seekin Older Top

38, 6'10" black hair, brown eyes, 160lbs, 5'9". Looking for older hot top. Hairy and big size men pluses. 51219

Our Mature Pleasures

Retired transplant from Boston, now in F, tall, NS, fun loving, friendly. My fun includes femwear, touching, safe oral mutuality, fantasy, light B&D. Never too late to learn. What are your pleasures? 51220

Do You Have an Easy/Relaxed

Lifestyle, one that's not hurried. I'm Asian 38yo, HIV-, file smoker ND/Alcohol. If you're 40-50GWM that's non-maternalistic & have a good hear, you may be the man for me. 51240

50ish Man Seeks 40ish Same

I'm HIV-, tall, thin, sincere, and have a real life I'd like to share. Career potential. 51240

Asian Top Seeking GWM Bottom

Asian, 5'7", 130#, slender, nice dick, seeking GWM, white body but not thin, muscular guy with facial hair A+. 51240

Handsome Loving Hunky Man

Accom. GWM seeks passionate relationship poss LTR. I'm 6'2", 190#, 42, very muscular, goatee Italian. Fun, sincere, exclusive, family oriented, healthy as a horse HIV+ non-progressive, puppy love to leather, sexually charged for relationship. 51241

Sonoma County Skiing Sex Buddy

GWM 50, 6'1", 180#, HIV+, NS, ND, masc, goatee, shaved head, playful, versatile, looking for well hung hunk buddy, 35+, who likes hiking, travel, swimming & gym w/o. 51240

GLM HIV+ Seeks GWM

Me: 5'11", 180#, 140, 4'4", 145#, 8' cut, curly, cuddly, romantic, considerate, professional, healthy, athletic. ISO same in masculine GWM for dating & LTR. You: 35-45, 5'10, fit. 51242

Tricks Are For Kids

Latino Male 32, 5'8" 210 stocky build looking to meet guys for friendship and hopefully more. You be over 40 HIV-. Ready for a boyfriend. 51240

Top Daddy Needed

Br submissive bottom boy, 39, WM, 5'7", 140, moustache, goate, tattoos, and in shape. Dad should be older and larger than boy

Just Shut-Up And Ride!

WM, 33, 5'10", 200lb, blond/blue, muscle hunk, 48"ch, 33"wa, 18"arms, wants good-looking masculine men to pump me or get pumped. Also love to get massaged and jerked-off anytime. ☎ 5141

69 Sucking Shooting

With handsome, negative, 30s, GWM. Tonight let's suck wildly and loudly, shooting cum together! ☎ 5142

Well-Hung Butch Bottom

GWM, 48, 5'8", 140#, HIV+, 8"cut, with tight hungry butt, seeks butch top for hot times and maybe relationship. ☎ 5143

Opposites Attract

Horse-Hung Italian Top seeks hot, in-shape, eager to please bottom with a small dick and tight butt. Any race. ☎ 5217

White Boxer Briefs

Muscular guys like getting it on with other dudes who look hot in butt hugging white boxer briefs. ☎ 5218

Hot Horny Cocksucker GWM

38, HIV-, 180#, 6', 8"cut, loves to suck on nice uncut men 21-45 with 8" or more. Latins, Europeans, Italians turn me on. ☎ 5219

Thirsty Black Cock Craving

Straight acting, sexy, slutty, smooth & selective ☎ icilian, 5'8", 150lbs, 30"waist 7X5"cut cock. ☎ have balls/ass, bikini line. ☎ eking horse hung black dicks. ☎ 5220

Bearly Passionate

Seeking sexually refined men under 45 that know how to communicate their needs. I am latino, 38, 6'2", 235, hairy, uncut & mostly bottom. Tall & european encouraged to respond. ☎ 5221

Spanking Fantasies Come True

Light and sensuous to heavier with belt & paddle. Limits respected. Novices welcome. Me: Attract, GWM, 48, 6'5", 250lbs, football players build. Your: attract GM (white latin, asian), 18-35, slim, smooth/moderate body hair, nice buns. ☎ 5222

Hi my name is Ralph I'm HIV bi

Looking for a bottom male between 18-24 for love and sex. I am a hot and horny top seeking a bottom male or a she male. ☎ 5223

Devoted to Dick?

Do you like to spend hours with a nice big rock strumming your lips & throat? Do you worship dick? Are you hairy, humorous, smart? Call me. ☎ 5224

Handsome Guy Age 43 8" cut

Seeks other handsome guys hung b or more. ☎ 5225

GWM Mid 30s Needs Directing

Can you take me? Can you make me your boy or slave? Are you the authoritative person for me? I'm waiting..... ☎ 5226

Straight Masculine Mature WM

My fantasy involves hung cut WM 65+, jacking off inches from my face while I'm on my knees valuing for your hot cock to explode on my face! ☎ 5227

My Doctorate In Fellatio

Requires passing oral exam. Well practice makes perfect! ☎ upport my higher education by shooting a massive load from my sucking you off so well. You'll want to repeat. ☎ 5228

Italian Sex GAM

For hot daytime weekend workdays. Must be 30-100 bottom, smooth & willing to receive this hung stud. ☎ 5229

Passionate About Life

Sexy/Spiritual Latin/Asian Bi ☎ age 58" 125# boyish mid 40s interested in slender fit playful slims 25-40 for movies, walks, dancing, mischief. Red-heads A+. ☎ 5231

Daddy Seeks Asian

For weekday encounters. I am total top & need to be totally serviced by hot Asian bottom in the day time. ☎ 5232

This is About U Sucking Me Off

That's what this is about. Me: WM 36, everything in proportion to handsome. Looking for same. LTR desired. ☎ 5234

Handsome Hung Muscular Italian

Seeks guys hung, handsome, in-shape, ready for hot sex top to bottom and very oral open mind open hole. ☎ 5235

In Gd Shape Oral Bk Btm

Seeking top dom kink & ranch. Avail eve & wk ends. ☎ 5236

ISO: Stud Fuckers

Italian stud bottom, 45, 6', 180#, goatie, buzzcut, ISO of hot top stud fuckers. Castro location weekends 12-5am. ☎ 5321

Sexy AM Seeks GWM

Filipino, 30, handsome, professional seeks GWM tops for regular pumping. 8ig blond frat types a+. ☎ 5322

TV TS Fem Boy

Mixed BM 5'11", 175, 44yo gym toned and attractive seeks to date passable TV/TS or fem boy to age 40. ☎ 5323

Big Dick Seeks Big Tits

GWM, 6'2", 175lbs, smooth, looking for well-built men who appreciate my big hose. ☎ 5324

Big Black Chest Men

Seeking large black men with big chest and nipples, hot and intense sessions working those tits and more. ☎ 5325

The British Are Best

8ig uncut British cock-head on scholarly gent, 45, available for fun and games with submissive Anglophiles boys (18-30). ☎ 5326

Horny GWM Seeks GAM Playmates

Sexy GWM 5'11", 165lbs, hairy chest, 8/10! seeks boyish, slender GAM for hot sex! ☎ 5331

LM ISO Affectionate WM

LM 42 6' 155lbs, ISO affectionate, straight-acting blond or redhead who doesn't identify with gay lifestyle, for lots of kissing and holding. Husky, hairy, blue collar types a+. Direct messages only please. No games. ☎ 5327

Oral Sex Companions

Looking to service well-endowed 7", under 50, lean masculine men. One or more. No recip is necessary. I am in my 50s, 5'10", 150#, dark br hair. ☎ 5328

Guys Assume I'm Top but I'm not!

I love worshipping a thick cock and low hangers and having my man pussy fucked/played with. Me: masculine good looks, tall, in-shape brn/blu, goatie, 43yo. Your: masculine, 25-55yo, HIV-. ☎ 5329

ISO Asian Gang Bang

Hairy-chested, 6'3", 195lbs, slim/muscular build, GWM with hot mouth and ass seeks 2-3 or more smooth-chested, GAM or G/LM group action. You supply the gang, I'll supply the place. ☎ 5330

Hairy Beast With Juicy Dick

Seeks suckboy with slim to muscular build. I am handsome 50yo, 6', 175, ☎ & P, HIV+. You are talented cocksucker. ☎ 5331

Sexy Cute Bottom

Masculine ☎ paritalitian, yng 40s, 5'7", Brn/blu, mustache, 140lbs, very well proportioned w/beautiful hairy butt. I have a boy body. You - attractive masculine 5'8" +, 28-40, ☎ 5332

All I Want For Christmas....

Is a spiritual fuckfellow. Handsome, hung, versatile daddy seeks a partner with an open heart to explore sexual connection. I'm a healthy positive with a body like a Roman statue. ☎ 53415

Back To Basics

44yo GWM 5'6", 140, blonde seeks another GWM who likes wearing tom & worn out 501's, black leather jacket and military boots (tall logger) sexual adventures in this attire. ☎ 53416

Handsome Top Wants Some Butt

Or a nice soft mouth. 8 inches looking for warm holes to fill. I in-shape, 38, goatie, blond and love a good time with you. ☎ 53417

Attention All Mature "Brothas"

Nice, sensuous WM 43 HIV- with hot mouth & tongue would love to safely service HIV- BM's 35-65. I'm talented & versatile who really knows how to please mature "brothas". ☎ 53418

Just Shut-Up & Ride!!!!!!

WM, 33, 5'10", 200lb blond/blue muscle hunk, 48"ch, 32"wa, 18"arms. Wants good-looking masculine men to pump me or get pumped till we squirt. Also love to get massaged and jerked off. Anytime. ☎ 53419

Slim Smooth Btm Boy Wants Dad

5'9" 145# Blond-brown needs muscle, hairy dad to handle & fondle - beautiful butt ready for daddy-eager and ready. ☎ 53420

Blond Top Seeks Rimmers

Handsome uncut, hairy chest, inshape well hung top with a great butt wants some tongue action from fun guys who want to find the right spot. ☎ 53422

Sadists Wanting But Hot Sub

Sex slave, torture subject, and urinal available for giv-dicked sadists. ☎ olid, 41, shaved head, tattoos, experienced. WE, TT, CBT, 8D, ☎ M. Make me your squirring bare cunt. ☎ 53423

Straight seeks over 65 Hung WM

My Asian girl friend wants to watch me on my knees as you grab back of my head and suck my virgin throat-shooting your hot load on my face. ☎ 53424

Asian or Latino Wanted for Fun

GWM 43, 140lb, HIV-, looking for early morning erotic encounters with GAM or G/LM, 25-45. Your place, friendship, fun & casual. Are you an early morning riser? ☎ 53233

Rugged Guy

Masculine, affectionate, athletic Asian, 51, 5'9", 155, smooth swimmer's body, seeks clean-shaven, lean or muscular smooth WM for hot, sensual body and oral workouts. ☎ 5328

Island Suckup Wanted!

Human vacuum in zip code 94501 needed to receive fast, frequent throat explosions. You're easy to reach (no call-backs) and have no age, race, looks hang ups. Experts only. ☎ 5330

Big Bears Big Daddies

GBM, 5'11", 250lbs, 45yo, big chest, hung seeks big, husky and pleasantly fat, men for uninhibited sex. My size or bigger only. Description. ☎ 5425

Black, Latin on White

You ☎ exy, top for this kinky tight butt bottom, service you front and back, uncut hot, nasty mind hotter! 20-45 and slender CK me out! ☎ 5426

Looking For Most Passionate Fun

You: 25-50, fit, interested in hot play, kissing, hugging and good friendship. Asian, Latin, Black A+. Me: 42, WM, 145lbs, healthy, young attitude. ☎ 5316

Masseur at Your Service

GWM semi-retired, prof. husky, hirsute, wrestler's build offers free massage for sir-acting married or single athletic males. ☎ 5317

Wanted: Hot HIV+ Mansex

I'll suck your big cock till' hand. Fuck me long and slow for hours! You suck my cock & I'll fuck you. Also, passionate kissing, tit and ball play/torture. Me: middle aged, good looking, 5'11", workout, brn/blu, HIV+, ISO regular buddy, not LTR. You: under 40, any race, versatile, safe sex, can keep it up, herb ok, no drugs or heavy drinks. ☎ 5318

Sanoma Co Dildo Fuckhole

Goodlooking guy needs nasty top men into hot, serious butthole play using fingers, big dildos. Like showing off hole, dirty talk. Enthusiasm more important than looks, age. All calls returned. ☎ 5319

ISO Dominant

Inexperienced, submissive attractive, in-shape 5'7", 148, 45, ISO in-shape dominant verbal to please and obey. ☎ 5320

E. Bay GW Bear CPL ISO Masc

Men for hot 3-ways. We're both 40s, bearded, tall, over 220#, hairy, masculine, 7/8, stable. You: 30+, 180#+, versatile, ready for intense weekend play & future E. Bay Bear parties. ☎ 5321

Best Butt Work In SF

Topman into assplay/erotic spanking. Hugs & kisses too. Me: attract, GWM, 48, 6'5" 250#, husky build, brown hair/mustache, hairy chest & stomach. Your: attra, GM (white, asian, latin), slim, smooth/moderate bodyhair, nice buns. ☎ 5322

Blk Btm Sks Tps

GBM 53 5'10" 200lbs, HIV+, btm to service GWM/GLM tops with my ass, oil massage, oral, video, foot/body worship. Open minded fuck buddy. ☎ 5323

Hot & Horny Like to Get Fucked

GWM 50yo 5'11" 175# HIV- NS ND, like to suck and get fucked and play around watch video's age & color not a factor please call. ☎ 5324

Hot Handsome Ball Worshiper

For the guy with big sensitive hands that like attention from an experienced mature GWM. 5'10, 155, toned, hot mouth and touch, bearded. You be aware of the pleasure, or curious. ☎ 5325

Got a Big Dick or Smooth Ass?

Get them serviced by a handsome oral expert world-reknowned for his expertise! Downtown location, quick callback. Treat yourself! You won't be sorry! ☎ 5326

Wanted: Guys With Hard Cocks

Looking for guys with hard cocks who want to party. Check out my hard cock and get my web address, let me what you're into. ☎ 5329

GWM Seeks GBM

5'10" 160#, HIV+, bottom, 44, looking for sex, friendship, possibly LTR, besides sex would like to get out & do things. Like books, movies, outdoor walks. ☎ 5421

Skinny In Sonoma County

Wrap your slender young (18-30) legs around mine while I give you great head and rimming. I'm 50s, nice looking, generous, fun, healthy. Love real/short or tall guys. ☎ 5332

Asian Tops Wanted

Great GWM, bottom, 32, 6'3", 280lbs. Great bjs, rimjoms and best ass. Dominant Asian males only. ☎ 5333

A-1 Oral Service - Delivered

SF GWM, HIV-, 6', handsome, delivers complete oral service to mature, trim guys who really dig getting sucked off. No reciprocation. HIV-. ☎ 5334

FETISHES**Daytime Asshole Eater**

Get your asshole eaten by a pro!!!! ☎ 5333

Navel Lover Looking for Same

28yo Latino/personal trainer looking for GWM 25-40. Must worship navels/love my cut dick, must be clean cut and discreet. Cute innies/outies call, we'll do more too! ☎ 5144

Husky Hairy Bears

Masculine, hung, bear-chaser 46, 5'11", 185lbs of solid pig meat looking for furry, stocky men into sucking, fucking, rimming, heavy tit play and man smells. Cum and get it!! ☎ 5145

Black Latin on White

You ☎ exy, top for this kinky tight butt bottom, service you front and back, uncut hot, nasty mind hotter, 20-45 and slender CK me out! ☎ 5146

Good With Yer Fists? I Am!

Hairy-muscle skintead into WBW wrestling, gloved boxing, bareknuckle fighting ISO tutt rugged hairy studs for winner-takes-all fights, mutual punching duties, leather/military scenes. Let's duke it out! ☎ 5147

Slave Seeks Master

26yo, attractive WM seeks experienced mature master for long sessions of humiliation and slave train training. ☎ 5148

Like Gettin' Slapped Around?

hung msc top (42) wants young (21-30) white guy to use, abuse and fuck. Get back to me ASAP. ☎ 5149

Naughty Boy Needs:

Discipline, kink and collar. boy is 5'8", 150#, 44, boyish, smooth, attractive. Wants master, slim smooth (where it counts), inventive. Older or Asian OK. ☎ 5150

Strictly Masturbation

Voyeur likes to watch you JO, also join in or lend helping hand. Age, race, sexual pref., unimportant. Just like to JO. I'm GWM, 35, 5'10", 170, cute. ☎ 5151

Muscle Leather FF Top Frat

Top notch muscled, 6'2", 185, 40yo, leather guy interviewing other well muscled similar studs, 21-40, who's hot for leather, FF, tops, group action, with bull gear! A masculine gusy ready for nasty butt games. Please call. ☎ 5152

Feetseersocksdressshoes

Attractive latino 32, 5'11", 190, Virgo, size 12 shoe, non smoker. Would like to meet whites, latins, or Asians into same fetish. Non smokers only under 38, no games. ☎ 5153

Toilet Boy

220#Bodybuilder climbs under his rim chair for feedings from demanding ranch tops who crave asshole and cock service. I like cum, piss, spit, rope holes, and getting fucked. Fuck with my mind. ☎ 5154

Domination and Affection

Gradual development integrating bright/dark aspects, sensual/mental/emotional not sexual. Your are attractive/fit/bottom, not leather/Soma. I'm prof, 52, 5'8", 165#, workout build, eclectic interests, bondage, more. ☎ 5155

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Thirst-quenching, tasty & nutritious. ☎ I'm, active, mature guy enjoys the intimacy of drinking direct from the equipment of a healthy, in-shape athletic stud, who enjoys providing it. ☎ 5158

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GWM 51, 6'1", 183 seeks others to 50 who need to feel dad's hand, hairbrush strap as punishment for their misbehavior. Get ready to get your butt blistered, son. ☎ 5335

Young Lthr Master

30, 5'10", 160#, blond, bl, gd/king, in search of GWM slaveboy into BDms, CBT, FF (I) WS, leather. You be between 25-30 gtlk, slim with good servitude, LTR-poss. Applicants call: ☎ 5336

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is a fist in my ass! Novice red hairy right seeks expert handballer to open me up. Attitude more important than looks. ☎ 5337

Little Guy-Big Cock?

You fit description big surprises come in small packages, love showing it off, being serviced. WM 50, wants to worship your big dick. Any race, uncut+A+. ☎ 5338

Tight Forever

I hope to relocate soon from Florida. ☎ eek GM with sensual/erotic passion for nylon tights. Love watching Ballet/Modern dance too. ☎ 5339

Boy Available for Dr. Goodglove

Submissive boy hole with Jr. Dick will surrender to your top, bondage, tweaked, slow, marathon. Boy will follow and serve your journey. Please and thank you only. Woof! ☎ 5427

Be My Puppy

I'm a cute GWM in 20s looking for a submissive boy over 6' tall and under 24 to leash and take for walks. heavy petting and sleeping in bed provided. ☎ 5428

HA HA HA HA HA

Tickle bottom seeks top. 31 5'8", 130, boyish and cute. Hold me down and make me squirm, jack me off real slow and make me squirt, you're in charge. ☎ 5429

Wanna Eat:

Your rock-hard, beach ball belly, with that moltingwater, bulbous, bellybutton, and your pulsating cock, wanna eat you up. You know who you are, 35-65, caucasian preferred. ☎ 5335

Master Sks Slaveboy For LTR

Me 6' 200# brn/blu. You be 18-23 small build slightly fem and feel a desire to have a master train you his way, if it so call now you're collars waiting. ☎ 5336

Feet! Fun! &

Ken Ryker

◀ Arts cover

would label Ken as a sexual person, neither gay nor straight (if that makes him bi, then so be it). Being sexual is a unique ability. You like it just for the feeling and the relief, without gender or issues clouding your hormones. Of course, the \$\$ helps."

I'm not as certain as Hart is about Ryker's intentions to be gay, although I'm certain about his desire to make gay pay. Comments he's made in recent magazines place him a little outside the embrace of a gay identity. Naming his profession for *Genre* magazine, he said, "I'd say I model. I model my penis." In my view, gay audiences are selling themselves short while Ryker (and others of his ilk) are banking their bucks.

Big star

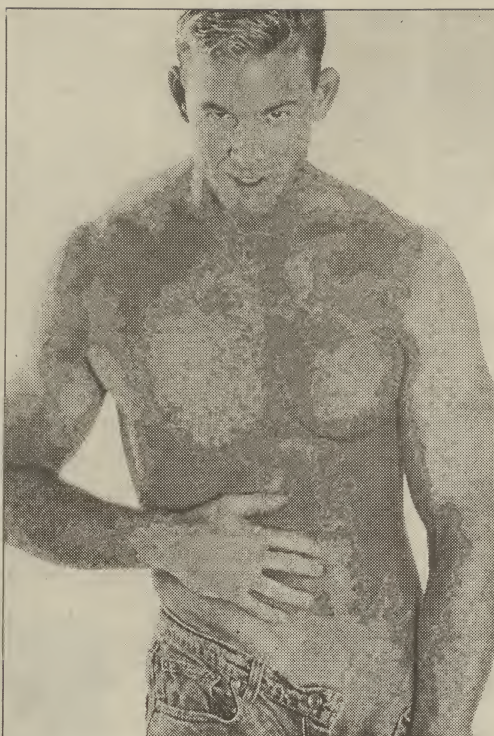
All this left me eager to crucify the 25-year-old star in his new video, but I've had to back off. *Ryker's Revenge* turns out to be intermittently effective, and its star a likable guy. I certainly can't deny the beauty of the 6'4" blond, and his cock is truly Big. He appears in a romantic opening scene, in the leather fantasy closing scene, and is generously offered in a three-way scene, as well (even if it is a dud).

But apart from his looks and his dong, what kind of performer is he? He lacks the charisma and passion of a true star, and can neither act, nor, it seems, act natural. Most critically, he performs the required sex acts only acceptably, showing a minimum of either expertise or visible enthusiasm. He's a bit of a hollow core around which to build a feature. Even so,

the faults of *Ryker's Revenge* cannot be laid solely at his feet. No, what repeatedly clogs this film are the clumsy screenwriting and directing of the much-lauded porn veteran Jim Steel, who also produced.

Ryker's Revenge attempts to play off the circumstances of the star's life. But the script's exposition is confusingly disjunct, and stupidly distorts real-life activities enough to be unintentional parody, while the portion intended as satire is a heavy-handed botch. The twin strands of plot converge with only the most difficulty. The garbled script is only seconded by surprisingly bad direction, which celebrates bad acting, belabored reactions, and sequential confusion, all of which are highlighted further by the editing.

But since you can scroll through the plot scenes, what's even more damaging is the disappointment of several key sex scenes. When Ken is asked to describe his favorite sexual memory, he recalls a three-way with Gabrielle and Oscar, the recently discovered brothers who have no other last name than "The Odyssey Twins." The Spanish siblings, who are attractive and well-built but unfortunately quite vapid, have no special talent other than looking identical. Since they have refused — at least on screen — to do the incest thing, a moment's excitement ensues as they simultaneously suck Ken's dick, their lips brushing together when their mouths slide down to the glistening tip of Ken's member. After that, the scene gets no more imaginative than allowing the brothers to impersonate logs while they lie atop each other to allow Ken entry to their adjacent asses. Then they jack off separate-



Ken Ryker in *Ryker's Revenge*

ly as Ken watches blankly. If this scene, which is about as intriguing as toast, is how the director and star can best illustrate a cherished sexual memory, then they both need to retire.

Leather fantasia

The video's next, and final,

scene is supposed to be Ken's showstopper — a leather fantasy! You can tell it's a leather scene because the set decorator has hung chains on the walls. Also, Ken wears a black leather chest harness and jock. Another signifier of leathersex is that Ken makes bottom Joey Hart beg for it ("What do you want?" "I want you to fuck me, sir"), before spitting in his face. Neither Ryker nor the director seem to know or care that they cannot conjure the rich ambience of leathersex with some cliché phrases and a black costume. Still, a gruff Ken is a good Ken — stiff and inexpressive come naturally to him. And Hart is an enthusiastic cocksucker and rimmer, showing no resistance when Ryker, choking his dick at the base to keep it firm, plows Hart's little hole in a big way.

With two key scenes for the star rousing our indifference, what's there to like about the film? Certainly the first sex scene, a romance for Ken and the long-dicked Steve Harper, playing his boyfriend. I like Harper a lot: he's smiling and taut-bodied, sharply focused on Ryker, and has a superlative and lengthy stay-hard dick. It's big, but within the realm of possibility. Most people turn to porn for the impossibilities it depicts; realism is neither a favored nor frequent mode in this genre. But Harper, with his pleasing personality, seems the kind of guy you might meet yourself, and that makes his long dick entirely approachable.

Although Ryker's initial caresses of his lover are jerky, as if he's making moves foreign to him, he warms to Harper's superior cock-sucking and rimming technique. Harper displays Ryker's dick skillfully, choking the base to make it stand all the way up for us, and then swallowing lots of it. This is what you tuned in for, and Harper worships the dick well. Ryker even moans, pumps with his hips, and seems moved. The pair 69 juicily, and then kiss hungrily. For a tentative moment, Ryker even rims Harper. The abrupt cut to full insertion of their fuck is disappointing, but Harper takes it down to Ryker's balls. They lie on their sides, and Harper's hard

cock flops heavily on his abdomen and thigh as Ryker, in an uncharacteristically skillful maneuver, pumps him while jacking him off, and kissing him, too.

You can skip the next scene, a half-hearted poolside tryst for the otherwise dependable Logan Reed and Joey Hart. But it's followed by a good round for Ricky Starr, playing Ryker's agent, and Dean O'Connor, as a newcomer Starr puts the make on. Starr is a beefy and smooth chunk, a Latin/Italian bruiser, who surprisingly bottoms for the much smaller, boyish O'Connor. Starr heartily beats his meaty dick against O'Connor's face, and then spreads his legs wide apart for a delicious view of the expert fuck O'Connor throws him, the camera recording those insertion shots clearly.

Miles of dick

This is followed by a quartet of lengthy-dicked gym bunnies, who play in the shower room after being turned on watching Ryker work out. There seem to be several miles of dick among them; director Steel excelled in this scene's casting. They have a very good group grope, and suck cock in various combinations of partners. But it's mostly J/O, which lets you enjoy these dicks in action. For a finale, lotsa cum rains down on recumbent ringleader Zachary Scott, whose face is a deliciously gooey mess of it when they're done.

So there's three-and-a-half successful scenes in the 90-minute flick (the half being the leather scene's fuck), and the rest of the time you can admire the supporting cast, the lavish sets, and the excellent sound and lighting. And I liked Sharon Kane's music, which is melodic for the romantic scene, and suitably butch in the leather scene.

But no amount of production expense can either disguise the inability of the filmmaker to write and film a simple narrative, or excuse the casting of a basically heterosexual star who can't come across with much more than the shallow thrill of his looks. I'll allow that many of the guys I've tagged "gay for pay" are actually "professionally bi." If you could think of them as activists instead of opportunists, these sex workers could be credited with contributing to the loosening of sexual identities. But bottom line, you aren't going to get from the majority of them the response and commitment that a gay performer can offer. Think of Cole Tucker in *Fallen Angel*, laying down an incredible rap of boy love and then shedding tears of joy, or Matt Bradshaw evincing a devotional fervor in most every movie he's made. Or any number of other gay men who are capable of celebrating on screen the joyous possibility and passion of gay sex. You just don't get that from a sometime queer.

But it's not really the performers who are at fault. It's the producers who think it's no counterfeits to employ them, and the directors who think a clinical display of the mechanics of sex represents sexuality. Maybe that's why *Ryker's Revenge* only clicks sporadically — it's emblematic of an industry with hollow goals. I'm worn out by these faux Hollywood packages and their glossy charades of sex-interchangeable, lackluster, robotic couplings. That's why I wanted to hang Ken Ryker, when it wasn't really his fault at all. He's just a guy trying to make a buck. And we're such an easy touch, tumbling for a big dick when all we really wanted to see was some guys making out like they liked it. ▼



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PERSONALS

Labor of love

A chat with Melissa Ferrick

by Gregg Shapiro

Of Melissa Ferrick's studio discs, which include *Massive Blur*, *Willing To Wait*, and *Everything I Need* (W.A.R.), her new one, the latter is by far the best. Simple, clean pop/folk melodies sung in her distinctive style, *Everything I Need* marks a strong return from one of the best openly gay singers and songwriters of the 90s. Ferrick, who has amassed quite a following from her amazing live shows, will be playing songs from her new album on her current tour.

Gregg Shapiro: The first album that was released when you moved to the W.A.R.? (What Are Records?) label was the stirring live disc *Melissa Ferrick +1*. It was interesting that you chose to do a live disc for your first project there. Can you explain how that came about?

Melissa Ferrick: What happened was after I came out of this dark place in my life, I played a show in Santa Fe, New Mexico and met a very famous photographer, Herb Ritts. He came to my show and fell in love with my music and brought me up to his house in Santa Fe. He bought thirty records and gave it to all of his friends. The next thing I knew, I was playing in L.A., and he had Sandy Gallin come down to see me play. Sandy Gallin manages Michael Jackson and Dolly Parton, he's like a huge industry guy. The next day, Sandy called me and said, "I want you to work with this guy Tommy Manzi," and he's my manager now. Tommy said, "The only way people are going to get what you do is if they see you live." So I recorded a bunch of live shows. The first show was in Boulder, Colorado, and Rob Gordon from the W.A.R. label was there, and he came up to me after the show and said, "I want to put this out."

Speaking of live performance, what can you tell me about your current tour?

What I've done this time is to stay on the road for as long as it takes to break this album. I don't think I've ever honestly worked an album for long enough. What happens for an artist like me, who has absolutely no road support from the label because they're an indie... I have to make a certain amount of money in order to exist on the road. I also don't have an agent, so I'm booking everything on my own. It's been really tiring, but also really rewarding, to call these clubs that I've had a history with since 1991, and say, "Hey, it's me. I'm coming through [town]. I have a new album." They're pleasantly surprised to hear from me. They're glad to hear that I sound alive and healthy. I'm saying, "Yeah, okay, we can charge five dollars at the door. Can I sell my record?" It's a lot more work, but I think in the end it will be a lot more rewarding.

Does an intensive tour schedule like yours get in the way of maintaining a romantic relationship?

Yeah. You can talk to my girlfriend about that. We're going to Hawaii for a week when I get home [from this tour]. I try to fly her to where

ever I am every five weeks. Five weeks is our limit, refuse to go longer than that without seeing each other. We've been together for three years, we're engaged to be married next year. We're in this together. It's not [a case of] this is my thing, that's your thing. I think that was what I used to think worked. Boy, I've really changed my mind a lot.

You cite Tom Waits as an influence on the gorgeous song "I Like It That Way." I also sensed a gleeful Ani DiFranco quality to some of the songs (especially "I Will Arrive," "Everything I Need," "Particular Place To Be," and "Don't Say Goodbye"). Would you agree with that?

You know, I never really thought about that before. I think that "I Will Arrive" and "Particular Place To Be" are definitely gleeful and happy. Happy in the sense that they're strong. They're resolved. There's no maybe.

As far as "I Like It That Way," especially the first line, "Who knows if it'll work this time?" that literally came after listening to Tom Waits. It was directly related to my "music career," and then the song took on a life of its own and it ended up being a mixture between my relationship with Lane and my relationship with my music, which was, "Am I going to make it?"

That kind of taunting chorus, "I'm the girl in the corner holding your eyes still." There's that area of my brain that pretends everything's OK, that pretends that I like it this way, that I like the tortured artistic state, is really a lie. I've really come to terms with that now. The whole idea of suffering for your art, that whole thing of, "I must be down in the trenches digging the holes, drinking myself into oblivion." I don't need to do that anymore.

I also think that there's a real sense of clarity, especially in the fact that living sober has completely changed my life. There's a lot of that on the record, there's a lot of recovery, sobriety, clear thinking. That makes a huge difference in my life. It's been really good.

I often wonder, when an artist is working on or promoting a particular project, whether or not they can sense how good it is or whether they're too close to it. The reason I pose this question is that I think that this is your best album.

Thank you. There's no doubt that I was 100% focused and 100% clear physically, emotionally, spiritually, on every level I was present on *Everything I Need*. It seems to sound really good, too, which is really weird since we did it on sixteen tracks of ADAT. It was a bizarre experience. I mean, the fact that Vinnie Colaiuta plays drums on this record is a complete Godsend. You just don't get a guy like that to play on an entire album, for, basically, food. It was wild that we got it done.

Finally, if you could be a square on the new *Hollywood Squares* game show, hosted by Whoopi Goldberg, who would you want to be in between?

Oh, my god! Well, definitely Judy Davis. And... Patricia Arquette. ▼

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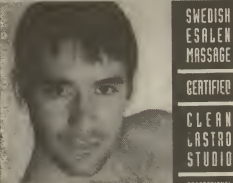
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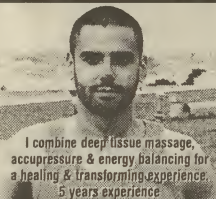


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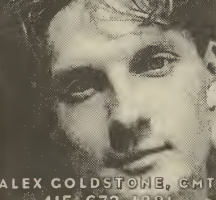
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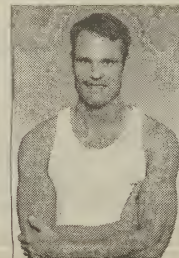
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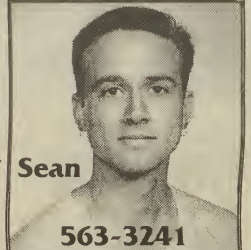
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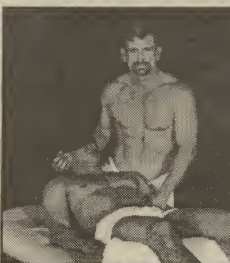
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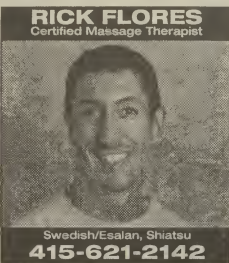
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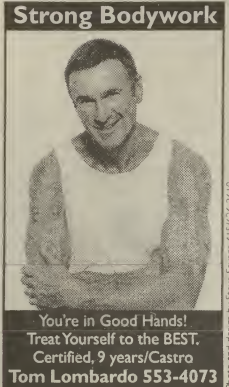
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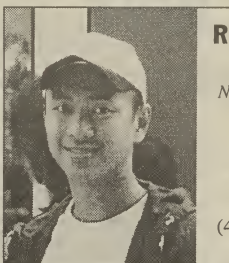
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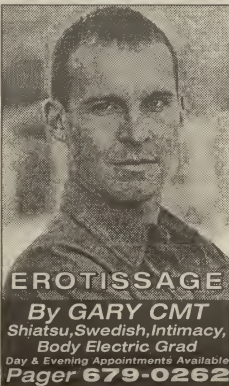
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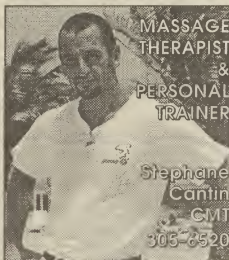


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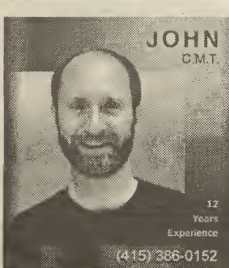
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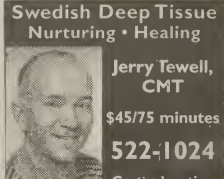
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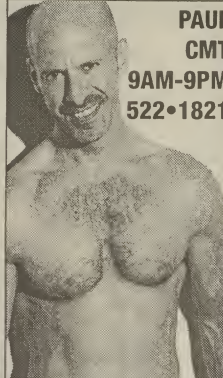
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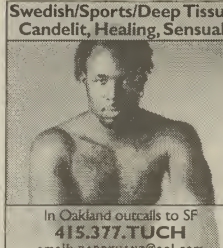
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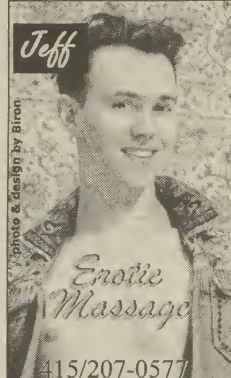
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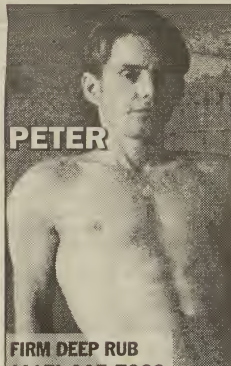
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Great chest & Butt on Handsome

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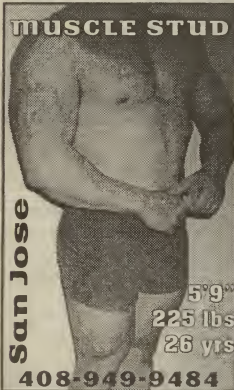
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LONG, SENSUAL SESSIONS
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BUILT. FULL PLAYROOM.
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5'10", 150 lbs, 7" uncut.
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San Jose
5'9"
225 lbs
26 yrs
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39yo top 6'1", 195#, 7" uncut, flattop
Gd. lking into bondage, S/M, W/S,
F/F, CBT, violet wand, toys, boots.
Beginner-? Have playspace & equip.
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ISTHE REAL THING
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Very Pleasing Personality
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Within 30 minutes - SF only

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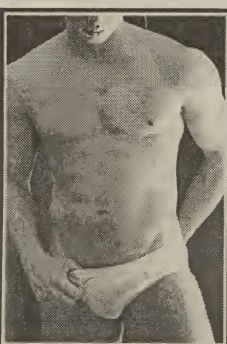
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22 6' 145# Blond/Blue
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Friendly and 8" uncut Out only
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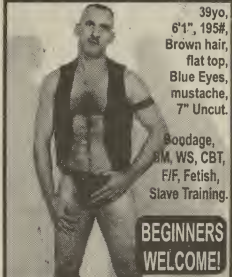
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Dominant Leatherman



39yo,
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Brown hair,
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Blue Eyes,
mustache,
7" Uncut.
Bodgde,
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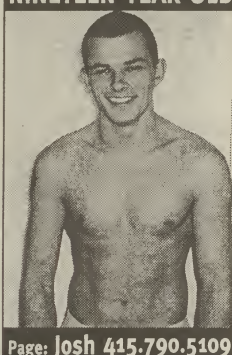
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NICE, 6', 155lbs,
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Hot & Husky Stud W/long brown
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Enough E's in deep throat to
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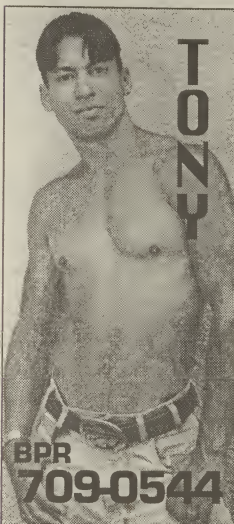
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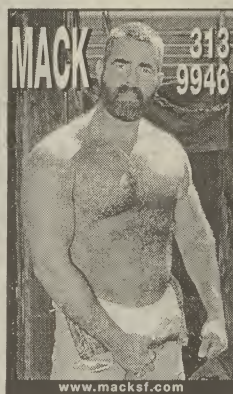
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Barrie 245-7616 24Hrs

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BIG CANDY CANE
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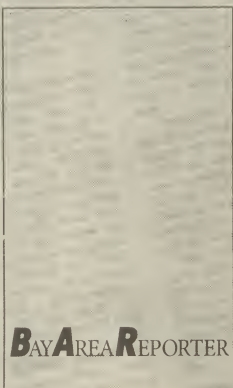
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Any scene. Out/ \$100up
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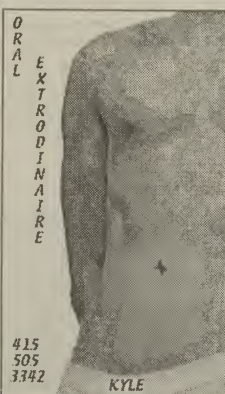
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GORGEOUS ASIAN
23yo 5'8" 135# Hairy swim bld 7cut
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Model Looks Sensual hard 791-3390

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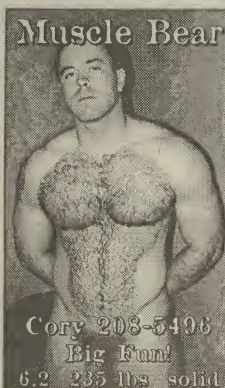
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Jeff, In/Out 377-8779 24Hrs



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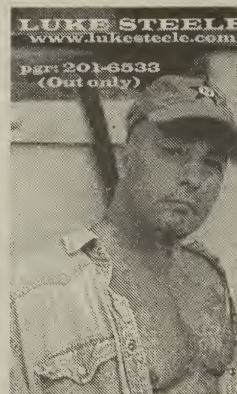
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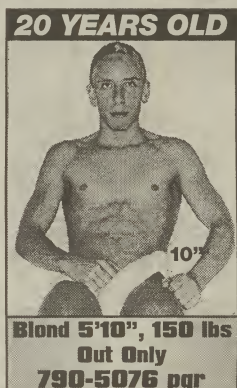
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"NEW IN TOWN"
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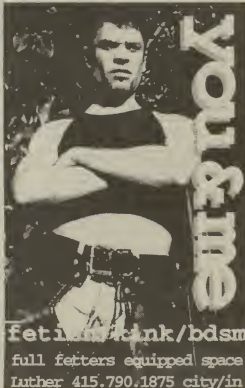
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Expiration Date

Signature

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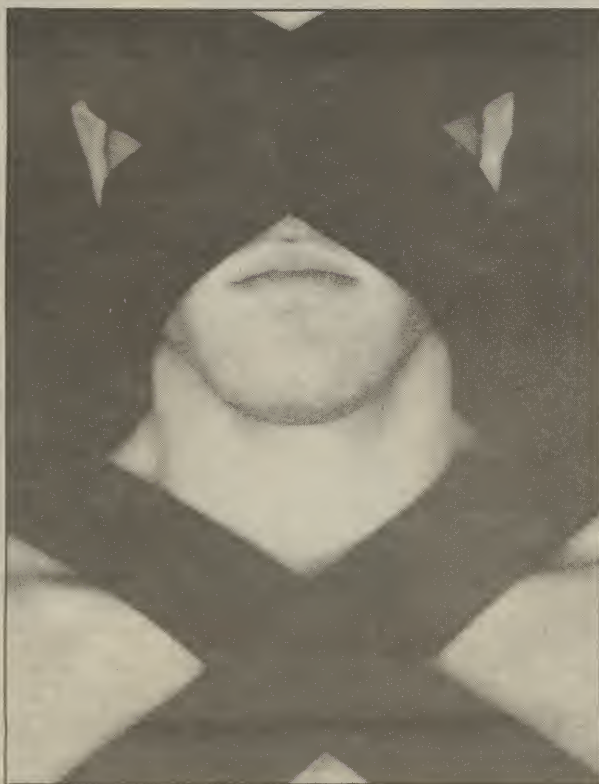
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